T.I. Oizerman

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Prof. Oizerman's main works (in Russian) are the following: *The Development of Marxian Theory on the Experience of the 1848 Revolution* **(1955);** *German Classical Philosophy — One of the Theoretical Sources of Marxism* **(1955);** *Hegel's Philosophy* **(1956);** *The Principal Stages in the Development of Pre-Merxian Philosophy* **(1957);** *The Main Stages in the Process of Knowing* **(1957);** *The Main Features of Modern Bourgeois Philosophy* **(1960);** *Fichte's Philosophy* **(1962);** *Problems of Historico-Philosophical Science* **(1969, 2nd ed. 1982);** *The Crisis of Contemporary Idealism* **(1972);** *The Forming of the Philosophy of Marxism* **(1974);** *Dialectical Materialism and the History of Philosophy. Historico-Philosophical Essays* **(1979).**

This monograph is a theoretical investigation of the process of the history of philosophy. The author examines the polarisation of philosophical systems in their main trends, viz., the materialist and idealist. He traces the struggle between materialism and idealism on the basis of the dialectical-materialist conception of the history of philosophy, and brings out the scientific and cultural-historical significance of dialectical materialism in present-day world philosophical thought.

T.I.Oizerman

The MainTrends in Philosophy

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INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt about the ideological significance of a theoretical analysis of the history of philosophy. For philosophy is the sole field of knowledge in which agreement among its leading spokesmen is the exception rather than the rule. In the sciences usually called exact or special, the area of disagreement is a comparatively small part of the vast territory already mastered, in which peace and harmony seemingly reign.[1] Whoever studies any of these sciences to some extent lacks choice; he assimilates established truths that will, of course, be refined, supplemented, and in part even revised, but hardly refuted. It is not so in philosophy, in which there is a host of doctrines, trends, and directions each of which, as a rule, has not only historical justification but also a certain actual sense. In philosophy one has to choose, to soak oneself in a specific atmosphere of philosophical thinking, by nature polemical, so as to find one's point of view, refuting all others that are incompatible with it. But a search of that kind presupposes study of the whole variety of philosophical doctrines, a condition that is obviously not practicable.

In concrete historical social conditions this situation of course has a certain, obligatory character. He who studies philosophy (or is beginning to) is not, of course, like the person browsing in a secondhand bookshop looking for something suitable for himself. The moment of choice is inseparable from the purposive activity by which any science is mastered. Since the history of philosophy investigates the real gains of philosophy, this choice becomes an intellectual conviction and ideological decision.

The aim of my book is to investigate the initial propositions of the history of philosophy. This concerns the basic philo-

sophical question and the main trends and directions in philosophy, themes that are organically connected with one another; special study of them makes it possible to understand philosophy as law-governed developing knowledge whose final result is dialectical and historical materialism.

The present work is a direct continuation of my *Problems of the History of Philosophy*,[2] the subject of which was such inadequately studied (in the general view) and largely debatable problems as the specific nature of the philosophical form of knowledge, the distinguishing feature and ideological function of the problematic of philosophy, and the nature of philosophical argument and dispute. In this new monograph, at least in its first part, on the contrary, I examine problems that are usually only treated in textbooks, i.e. that do not constitute the subject of research at all. But since these problems are of fundamental significance, they deserve more than the attention just of teachers. Problems that are usually called elementary are basic ones, the starting point of research, and the answers to them in no small way predetermine its direction and results. Lenin, stressing that politics 'is a concentrated expression of economics' and that 'it must take precedence over economics', noted in this connection that 'it is strange that we should have to return to such elementary questions' (142:83). It is well known that this elementary question has proved to be not so simple, so matter-of-fact as not to need investigation. Roughly the same can be said of the basic philosophical question. The Marxian proposition 'Truth is a process' (143:201) also relates to elementary but, I should say, fundamental truths that do not remain invariable since they are enriched by new scientific data.

Textbooks that expound the main philosophical question in popular form and provide a correct idea of the struggle of trends in philosophy, do a very useful job. But they often, unfortunately, create a deceptive impression of excessive simplicity and very nearly absolute clarity about matters that are by no means simple and clear. This fault is seemingly the obverse of the methods standards that a textbook has to meet, since it is limited to exposition of simply the fundamentals of the science.[3] The sole means of overcoming these shortcomings of popular expositions is to investigate the theoretical fundamentals of the science. It was not just these general considerations, however, whose importance should not be overestimated, that determined my theme. The point is that the basic philosophical question, and likewise the problem of the main trends in philo-

sophy, are not truisms but quite special problems for research in the history of philosophy. What makes them so? The aim of my introduction is to provide a preliminary answer to that, which will, at the same time, pose the problem.

First of all, let me point out the indisputable but far from always realised truth that the Marxian proposition about the basic philosophical question is not simply a statement of an empirically obvious fact, but a theoretical formulation of a definite discovery made by Frederick Engels. Only a few pre-Marxian philosophers came near to theoretical awareness that there is a basic question common to various philosophical doctrines, including opposing ones. Most of them rather assumed that each doctrine was characterised by its own main philosophical question precisely because it largely diverged from others. That is also, and even more so, true of contemporary non-Marxian philosophers. Albert Camus, for instance, claims lhat

> there is only one truly serious philosophical problem, that of suicide. To decide whether life is, or is not worth the trouble of living, is to answer the fundamental question of philosophy (28:15).[4]

The separate exceptions only confirm this prevailing tendency.

The question posed by Camus must not be underestimated, even if only because it forms part of a definite philosophical tradition whose beginning was laid by thinkers of the Ancient East and philosophers of the Hellenistic era. The alienation of human activity and of its product, and the alienation of nature regularly engender it and give it profound sense. Yet it is not the basic philosophical question, if only because it is not such for the majority of philosophical doctrines. But perhaps it is a transmuted form of it, since it is a matter of the attitude of human consciousness to human existence? Or is it the basic issue of existentialist philosophy? It is still incumbent on us, however, to investigate whether each philosophy has its special basic question.

Neopositivists, having got rid of philosophical problems as imaginary and in fact not real problems, long ago concluded that the question of the relation of the spiritual to the material was a typical pseudoproblem, since it was quite unclear whether what are called matter and spirit existed and whether these verbal names were abstractions without meaning.

> Mind and matter alike are logical constructions [Bertrand Russell, for example, wrote], the particulars out of which they are constructed, or from which they are inferred, have various relations, some of which are studied by physics, others by psychology (230:307).

This point of view, expressed half-a-century ago, has received unexpected support in our day from those who suggest that no psyche exists, as cybernetics is alleged to demonstrate. Among those who share this conviction one must also name the adherents of the philosophy of linguistic analysis, who try to show that the material and spiritual are not facts that theory should be guided by, but only logical spectres. As for the philosophical question that they call basic, it (in the opinion of the analytic philosophers) was generated by incorrect word-use: meanings were ascribed to words of the ordinary common language that did not belong to them, with the consequence that disputes arose about the sense of words that was quite clear until they became philosophical terms.

Contemporary idealist philosophy, especially in its existentialist and neopositivist variants, has had considerable influence on some who think themselves Marxist philosophers, and who have undertaken a revision of dialectical and historical materialism. The fact that the basic philosophical question does not lie on the surface serves them as convenient grounds for denying its real significance. But it is found here that those who claim to have created a 'neo-Marxist' philosophy have not engaged in serious research. They simply proclaim it. The Yugoslav philosopher Gajo Petrović, for instance, declares:

> I do not maintain that the basic philosophical question, as understood by Engels, Plekhanov, and Lenin, is meaningless. But everything that is meaningful is not 'basic' (204:331).

That quite common idea is supplemented by a consideration of an ontological character:

> Division into matter and spirit is not the basic division of the world we live in, nor is this basic division within man. How then can the basic question of philosophy be the question of the relationship between matter and spirit? (204:332).

The 'spirit-matier' relationship is not, in fact, the primary, initial one; it presupposes the rise of the spiritual, which, though a result of the material, is not a property of matter in any of its states. It is that circumstance, in spite of Petrović's conviction, that makes it possible to realise the significance of the question of the relationship of the spiritual and material, the sense of which consists in formulating the dilemma: which is primary, the material or the spiritual?

Petrović, however, does not allow for the fact that the basic philosophical question demarcates two main, mutually exclusive trends in philosophical research. He proclaims that only the problem of man has fundamental philosophical significance.

He accompanies that with sweeping declarations about socialist humanism, the humanist mission of philosophy, the significance of philosophical anthropology, etc. There is no arguing that the problem of man (especially in its concrete historical posing, i.e. as that of the social emancipation of the working people) has a central place in the world outlook of Marxism. But to counterpose the problem of man to the question of the relationship of the spiritual and material means not to understand the decisive point that this question began to be called basic first of all because it theoretically predetermined the polarisation of philosophy into two main trends. It is also not difficult to understand that the existence of materialist and idealist solutions of the problem of man also indicates why, precisely, the relation of the spiritual and material became the basic question of philosophy. It is to Engels' credit that he singled out this question, the answer to which forms the theoretical basis for tackling all other philosophical questions, from a host of philosophical problems.

In summing up my introductory remarks on the problem that constitutes the object of investigation in the first part of my book, I must note that disputes around the basic philosophical question also take place among philosophers who defend and develop the dialectical-materialist outlook. A point of view is often expressed in Soviet philosophical literature that the basic philosophical question is, properly speaking, the subject-matter of philosophy, since all the problems considered philosophical in the past have passed into the province of special sciences. That point of view has been formulated most definitely by Potemkin:

> The statement that the question of the relation of thought to existence is the great basic question of *all* philosophy has been a consistently scientific general definition of the subject-matter of philosophy from the moment it arose (214:12).

Stressing in every way possible the special place occupied by the basic philosophical question in determination of the specific nature of the philosophical form of knowledge, he criticised those workers who suggest that even though this question, and that of the subject-matter of philosophy, overlap, they are still different problems. But he does not explain, unfortunately, what is the relationship between the basic philosophical question and the Marxian doctrine of the most general laws of development of nature, society, and knowledge. Pre-Marxian philosophy, he says, considered 'the world as a whole its subject-matter' (*ibid.*). Marxian philosophy, he suggests, does

not include any conception of the world as a whole. But don't the materialist and idealist answers to the basic philosophical question form two opposing views of the world as a whole? I shall limit myself here simply to asking the questions, since they call for developed answers that I propose to set out in the respective chapters of my monograph.

Some Marxist philosophers consider the basic philosophical question as a most important aspect of the subject-matter of philosophy.

> The relationship of matter and consciousness [Alfred Kosing writes] forms a fundamental aspect of the subject-matter of Marxist-Leninist philosophy, and the basic question of philosophy, a fundamental part of its content, as the theoretical formulation of this relationship. Theoretically it is the supreme question of philosophy, because the two possible trends in philosophy—materialism and idealism—follow from the different answers to it, and that determines both the materialist and idealist solution of all philosophical problems and the corresponding interpretation of all philosophical categories (124:902).

Kosing does not limit the subject-matter of philosophy to investigation of the 'spiritual-material' relation, since the subject-matter of any science cannot be confined once and for all to an established round of questions. He stresses the principled ideological significance of the question, which formulates the basic philosophical dilemma, and as such forms the basic philosophical question. In stating that fact I cannot help asking, however: in what way is philosophy, especially in our day, concerned with investigation of the 'spiritual-material' relation. For this relationship is studied in its specific forms primarily by the appropriate scientific disciplines. Historical materialism, an integral part of Marxist-Leninist philosophy, of course examines the relation of social consciousness and social being, but the particular forms of social consciousness also constitute the object of study of several special sciences.

So, for a proper understanding of the sense and meaning of the basic philosophical question, it is necessary to investigate its real extension and its relation to the psychophysical problem with which the physiology of higher nervous activity and psychology are primarily concerned. What does one have in mind when calling the question of the relation of consciousness and being, the spiritual and the material, the *basic* philosophical question? It is necessary to clarify the sense of the term 'basic' employed in a definite context in particular because some Marxian philosophers consider the philosophical question being discussed to be a problem subject to investigation (and, moreover, the main problem), while others treat it (or

rather its materialist answer) as a firmly established scientific premiss, with the significance of a principle, in knowledge of everything that constitutes the subject-matter of philosophy.

Understanding of the real meaning of the basic philosophical question calls for investigation, in my view, of its *epistemological necessity*. Only such investigation can demonstrate the legitimacy of the statement that it is precisely this question that constitutes the necessary premiss of all philosophical problems that are not deducible from one or other of its answers.

The expression 'basic question of philosophy' points to there being other philosophical problems that also constitute the subject-matter of philosophy. But can one consider them simply derivatives of the basic philosophical question? The problem of the particular and the general, essence and phenomenon, change and development are all problems, of course, that do not logically stem from the content of the basic philosophical question.

I said above that the problem of man is undoubtedly one of the chief philosophical themes. The same must seemingly also be said of the problem of the unity of the world. What is the relation of the basic philosophical problem to these? That requires special investigation which, it is to be hoped, will show that the concept of the basic philosophical question has a specific sense and that the meaning of other philosophical problems is consequently in no way diminished.[5]

The second part of my book will comprise an analysis of philosophical trends as natural forms of the existence and development of philosophy. Since the basic philosophical question formulates a dilemma, its alternative answers theoretically predetermine the polarisation of philosophy into materialism and idealism. But there are other trends in philosophy besides materialism and idealism. Why do we single out materialism and idealism precisely as the main philosophical trends? It is necessary, in my view, to make a special investigation of the whole diversity of trends in philosophy and of their relation to materialism and idealism.

Philosophical *trends* must seemingly be distinguished from *doctrines, schools,* and *currents*. A doctrine, as a system of definite views, logically connected with one another, can be treated as the primary phenomenon of the historico-philosophical process. Since one doctrine or another, created by an individual philosopher or group of like-minded ones, finds its continuers who develop or modify it, philosophical schools

take shape. The aggregate of the various modifications of one and the same philosophical doctrine, developed by various, sometimes competing, schools can be called a current. Such, for example, are the most influential currents in contemporary bourgeois philosophy: viz., existentialism, neopositivism, 'critical rationalism', philosophical anthropology, and Neothomism. Each of them is built up from a number of doctrines and schools that usually enter into polemics with one another in spite of their community of basic theoretical premisses.

A trend represents an aggregate of philosophical currents (and, consequently, of doctrines), which for all their differences with one another defend certain common positions of principled significance. Trends usually exist over very long historical periods, and some of them have existed right from the rise of philosophy to our day. Rationalism, empiricism, metaphysical systems, dualism, pluralism, naturalism, 'realism', nominalism, phenomenalism, supranaturalism, scholasticism, mysticism; irrationalism, intuitionism, organicism, sensualism, essentialism, mechanism, anthropologism, pantheism—such is a far from complete list of the philosophical trends, not altogether free of elements of a conventionality that can only be surmounted in the course of a further substantiation of the typology of philosophical doctrines.

Inquiry into the relation between the main trends in philosophy, i.e. materialism and idealism, is a most important task of the history of philosophy. It must be theoretically substantiated by evidence that there really are *main* trends in philosophy and that these trends are precisely materialism and idealism. Both are directly linked with two mutually exclusive answers to the basic philosophical question. One cannot say that, of course, about rationalism, empiricism, naturalism, anthropologism, and several other trends, which may have both a materialist and an idealist character. Does that not indicate that these trends are linked, though in a mediated way, with one or other answer to the basic philosophical question? The same can seemingly be said as well about the opposition between the metaphysical mode of thinking and the dialectical.

It does not call for great penetration to discover within empiricism, sensualism, anthropologism, naturalism, rationalism, and other philosophical trends an opposition of materialism, and idealism, i.e. materialist empiricism and idealist empiricism, anthropological materialism and anthropological idealism, and so on. This witnesses that all the trends named are specific forms of materialism or idealism. Materialism and idealism

are consequently really the main philosophical trends, but contemporary bourgeois philosophers interpret these facts differently. They usually treat empiricism, rationalism, anthropologism, and other trends as a surmounting of the basic philosophical dilemma, the discovery of new fields of inquiry across the traditional, 'one-sided' opposition of materialism and idealism.[6]

The specific form that materialist (or idealist) philosophy takes, thanks to empiricism or anthropologism, does not, of course, follow with logical necessity from one or other of the answers to the basic philosophical question. The peculiarity of these main philosophical trends is due to the diversity of the content of philosophy, and its interaction with other forms of social consciousness, social development, the achievements of science and engineering, etc.

One must remember, however, that far from all the trends listed are polarised into an opposition of materialism and idealism. There is no materialist irrationalism, intuitivist materialism, or materialist phenomenalism. Irrationalism, intuitionism, and phenomenalism are varieties of idealist, and only idealist philosophy. Mechanism, atheism, and hylozoism, on the contrary, mainly characterise certain historical forms of materialism. Analysis of some of the concrete, historical modifications of materialism and idealism is a task of the present inquiry.

The survey of philosophical trends is usually reduced in popular works to a description of materialism and idealism. The reader is sometimes given the impression that there are no other trends at all. But in that case one cannot, of course, understand why materialism and idealism form the main trends in philosophy. It is consequently necessary to analyse the different trends from the angle of their relation to materialism or idealism. An inquiry of that kind not only has to reflect the real confrontation that constitutes the content of the history of philosophy, but also has to concretise our understanding of materialism and idealism.

The history of philosophy is a picture of a supreme diversity of ideas and dramatic tension. No doctrine (let alone current or trend) can be concretely defined simply by relating it to one of the main trends, just as no phenomenon can be characterised by an indication alone of its belonging to a certain kind or type. Aristotle, and Leibniz, and Schopenhauer were idealists, but that very important circumstance does not indicate the differences between their doctrines, which are very substantial. It is necessary to inquire into the different types of idealism; and

that presupposes elucidation of the attitude of the thinkers being studied to other doctrines and trends within which there was a development of both materialist and idealist philosophy. The idealist Leibniz was a rationalist, the founder of a metaphysical system, monadology, a pluralist, a dialectician, etc. That does not mean that the concept of idealism does not adequately define his doctrine; all its characteristics are specific definitions of his idealism, i.e. his rationalism, like his metaphysics, pluralism, etc., has an idealist character.[7] There are consequently no grounds for opposing the separate characteristics of Leibniz's philosophy to one another. They indicate that idealism, like any doctrine, possesses both general, particular, and individual features. That is seemingly not taken into account by those inquirers who are inclined to regard rationalism, empiricism, anthropologism, and all the other features of one doctrine or another, as something existing in them over and *above* materialism or idealism. With such an approach to philosophical theory its basic content is schematicised and distorted.

The problem of trends is a main one in study of the specific nature of philosophical knowledge. Trends exist, it is true, in all sciences, but in them they are usually trends of research conditioned by the choice of objects or methods of investigation. Trends of that kind often develop in parallel, encouraging one another; and when contradictions arise between them they are resolved over a comparatively short historical period, since the dispute is about partial matters that are resolved by observation, experiments, and practical tests. It is another matter with philosophical trends, which cannot help being opposed to one another. These trends actually took shape as philosophical ones, since there were other philosophical (and not only philosophical) systems of views with which they came into conflict. The whole historical past of philosophy witnesses to philosophical views (and that means trends, too) as a rule having a mutually exclusive character.

Contemporary bourgeois philosophers usually make an absolute of this fact, i.e. consider it an intransient fundamental characteristic of any philosophical dispute, thus reviving the main thesis of ancient scepticism, viz., that philosophy differs radically from any other knowledge in that unanimity is impossible in principle in it. Hegel wittily criticised the sceptical interpretation of the history of philosophy as the point of view of ordinary consciousness, which imagines itself philosophically profound when in fact it is only fixing differences and disagree-

ments that appear on the surface, without noting the incomparably more essential, though not obvious unity. Hegel treated disagreements between philosophical doctrines as contradictions in the process of development of the many-sided truth contained in these, at first glance quite divergent philosophies. He incidentally distinguished the subjective notions of philosophers about the sense and substance of their doctrines from their true content (and real relation to other doctrines), which is revealed both by the history of the development of philosophical knowledge and by inquiry into this process.

Hegel's dialectical approach to the history of philosophy, thanks to which the differences between doctrines, theories, currents and trends were treated as necessarily connected with identity, played an immense role in moulding the science of the history of philosophy (which was impossible without overcoming scepticism in the history of philosophy). But he harmonised the process of the history of philosophy too much, depicting it as the forming of absolute self-consciousness. The plurality of systems is not so much a fact in the Hegelian history of philosophy as a semblance of fact that is removed by the triumphal progress of the Absolute Spirit. This root fault of Hegel's conception of the history of philosophy can only be eliminated by a thorough analysis of the struggle between materialism and idealism as the essential content of the world process of the history of philosophy.

The contemporary epoch in philosophy is that of the confirmation of dialectical and historical materialism, on the one hand, and of the crisis of idealist philosophising on the other. Indirect recognition of this fact is the militant denial, characteristic of contemporary bourgeois philosophy, of the possibility and necessity of the unity of philosophical knowledge. The Greek sceptics, in denying the unity of philosophical knowledge, rejected philosophy as incapable of yielding indisputable truths. The followers of the bourgeois 'philosophy of the history of philosophy',[8] on the contrary, consider the greatest merit of philosophy to be that it is allegedly not interested in 'impersonal' objective truths; philosophy allegedly creates its own world in which the place of the facts recorded as truths is taken by statements that have sense irrespective of their possible truth. From the angle of this modernism in the history of philosophy, a philosophical statement ceases to be such when it becomes an 'acquired truth'. The real content of philosophy, according to this view, is formed by the mode of self-assertion of the philosophising individual and his inimitable creative individuality.

An extreme expression of this conception is the statement that philosophical trends and currents are only outward divisions established by commentators, since every philosophical doctrine is authentic only in so far as it is unique. General, common features, if they are present in various philosophical doctrines, point to that which presents no interest in the latter. Recognition of the essential significance of philosophical trends means, in the context of the 'philosophy of the history of philosophy', denial of the specific nature of philosophical knowledge and of its radical difference from science. The theory of the course of the history of philosophy makes an absolute of the element of the singularity inherent in every outstanding philosophical doctrine. But the uniqueness is relative, and the real meaning of a theory is determined not simply by its uniqueness but by its actual involvement in the development of knowledge, its answers to questions already posed before it, which means its inclusion in the existing problematic.

In spite of the fact that individual spokesmen of the 'philosophy of the history of philosophy' make a substantial contribution to the science of the history of philosophy[9] in their concrete inquiries devoted to the great philosophers of the past, their theoretical conception is clearly unsound. It intensifies the historically obsolete metaphysical counterposing of philosophy to non-philosophic research, and in the end reduces philosophy to a variety of artistic creation. This must not, of course, be treated as a belittling of the significance of philosophy, but it is still a fact that philosophical systems are not artistic works even when they are written in verse. The introduction of aesthetic criteria into philosophy is therefore in fact an indirect denial of philosophy as a specific form of knowledge.

I have already remarked that a discarding of the basic philosophical question, and likewise attempts to 'rise above' the opposition of materialism and idealism, are a characteristic feature of contemporary bourgeois philosophy. The subjectivist denial of the importance of philosophical trends is a modification of the reactionary tendency often met under the flag of de-ideologisation of philosophy. Since the subject-matter of my book is a theoretical analysis of the course of the history of philosophy, it is at the same time a critical analysis of the most influential idealist philosophical conceptions of our day.

NOTES

[1] In contrast to today's philosopher-methodologists of a sceptical turn, the classical scientists of the twentieth century have been profoundly convinced that the sciences of nature really cognise it, which explains scientists' agreement on most fundamental matters. As Max Planck wrote: 'Our present picture of the world already ... includes certain features that can no longer be effaced by a revolution either in nature or in the human spirit' (207:631). Here and subsequently, the first number in brackets indicates the number of the source in the bibliography at the end of the book; the number in italics indicates the volume, when there is more than one in a work, and the last number the page.

[2] *Problemy istoriko-filosofskoi nauki,* 2nd ed. (Mysl, Moscow, 1982).

[3] In this connection it is not out of place to cite L.A. Artsimovich's following interesting remark: 'The author of a textbook, compelled by the necessity to present a science as a stable complex of information, selects appropriate material, rejecting what seems to him not to be adequately verified, problematical, and unstable. As a result he unwittingly manages to give the reader who is starting to study a new field the impression that it is completed. Everything seems in the main to have been done, and it now remains, chiefly, to fill in the details. The textbook may therefore sometimes weaken the reader's will for independent thinking by demonstrating the science to him as a collection of well preserved memorials of the past and not as a road to a future shrouded in fog. There is also a purely psychological reason for the conservatism of textbooks. They are usually written by people of the older generation for young beginners, at a time when the middle generation is altering the face of the science by its efforts, broadening or smashing previously established notions' (9:142). It must be said that Artsimovich had in mind primarily textbooks of physics, but it would be at least presumptuous not to see that this consideration applies *mutatis mutandis* to textbooks of philosophy, despite the very substantial differences in the content and rates of development of the two sciences.

[4] One must note, incidentally, that Camus is developing a proposition here expressed by Nietzsche who suggested that Greek tragedy 'guessed where the great question mark was put, about the value of existence' (194:2). As a philosophically thinking writer, Camus believed that this tragic question should occupy the main place in philosophy.

[5] Buhr and Irrlitz (GDR) point out in a book on German classical philosophy, that the basic problem of classical bourgeois philosophy—from Bacon and Descartes to Hegel and Feuerbach—was that of mastering laws of nature and rational restructuring of public life. 'Bacon and Descartes no longer regarded objective reality, like feudal-clerical thought, as God-given and dependent on Him, but as governed by man himself—and shapeable by him' (24:19). Hegel and Feuerbach 'over and over again came back to the question which Bacon and Descartes first formulated implicitly, viz., how can Man rationally master nature and society? (*ibid.*). This 'basic problem' of classical bourgeois philosophy does not in the least lessen the significance of the basic philosophical question.

[6] The following statement of the Western philosopher Gehlen is indicative in this respect: 'If philosophy comes alone to man "from outside" it risks

becoming materialist. If it starts from facts of consciousness it will be abstract immanent-idealist and speak about an incompatible ideal—and an indeterminate general human origin' (73:273). In trying to avoid both materialism and idealism, Gehlen counterposes a philosophical anthropology that eclectically combines idealist empiricism and irrationalism with separate materialist propositions.

[7] It is worth stressing that the features of Leibniz's idealism listed (incidentally as with the main features of any outstanding philosophical doctrine) far from exhaust its content and all its inherent peculiarities; I have said nothing of his dynamism, about the theory of small perceptions, the principle of continuity, the substantiation of optimism, theodicy, logical investigations, etc. Indication of the place of a philosophical doctrine in the framework of some trend or current and elucidation of its *main* (materialist or idealist) content, have to bring to light the specific forms in which it is expressed and developed and not replace concrete inquiry into its features.

[8] My article 'Marxism and the Contemporary Bourgeois "Philosophy of the History of Philosophy"' in the symposium *Leninism and Contemporary Problems of Historico-Philosophical Science* (edited by M.T. Iovchuk, L.N. Suvorov, *et al.)* (Moscow, 1970) is devoted to a critical analysis of the main propositions of the 'philosophy of the history of philosophy'.

[9] I would mention in particular the following inquiries by Martial Guéroult: *L'évolution et la structure de la doctrine de la science chez Fichte, 2* vols. (Les belles lettres, Paris, 1930), *La philosophie transcendenlale de Salomon Maimon* (Les belles lettres, Paris, 1931) (these two works received prizes of the French Academy of Sciences); *Dynamique el métaphysique leibnizien-nes* (Les belles lettres, Paris, 1934); *Descartes selon l'ordre des raisons*, 2 vols. (Aubrier, Paris, 1953).

Part One

THE BASIC PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTION AS A PROBLEM OF THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

I

THE SENSE AND MEANING OF THE BASIC PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTION

1. The Basic Philosophical Question and the Problematic of Philosophy

The question of the relation of consciousness to being, of the spiritual to the material (is the spiritual a property of matter, a product of its development? or, on the contrary, is the material a derivative of the spiritual?) has not constituted a problem for a long time, strictly speaking, if, granted, one calls unresolved matters, subject to investigation, problems. The materialists of antiquity had already posed this question correctly, though only on the basis of everyday observations. The materialism of modern times, anticipating special inquiries and their results, showed that the spiritual does not exist without matter organised in a certain way. Natural science has not only confirmed the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question, but also successfully investigates the mechanism of the formation, functioning, and development of the psychic. Only a few idealists are now so bold as to claim unreservedly that the psychic is independent of its physiological substratum. While rejecting the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question, contemporary idealism is also forced to re-examine its own traditional idealist answer.[1] This explains the characteristic striving to eliminate this question as not, allegedly, correctly posed.

A resolved philosophical problem is not, of course, consigned to the archives because of its ideological significance.

New scientific discoveries (cybernetic devices, say, that model the thinking brain) undoubtedly enrich the materialist answer. And idealists' attempts to discredit the basic materialist position evoke a necessity again and again to explain its content and meaning, basing oneself on the aggregate of the facts of science and practice. But that cannot, of course, be grounds for revising the materialist answer to the basic philosophical

question. To convert it again into a problem means to drag philosophy back, which incidentally is what contemporary idealists are engaged in. In philosophy, as in any science, the researcher is dealing with problems. As for resolved matters, they find their rightful place in textbooks.

All these considerations anent the proposition that can be called an axiom of all materialism enable one to conclude that there are no grounds for the notion common in Marxist literature about the coincidence of the subject-matter of philosophy (including the subject-matter of the philosophy of Marxism) and the basic philosophical question. The subject-matter of philosophy, and of any science, must be defined, indicating the class of objects that it studies. This subject-matter can, of course, be described as the aggregate of the historically established, logically interconnected problems whose origin is due to socio-economic processes, the development of knowledge, and the discovery of new objects of philosophical inquiry or new interpretations of already known facts. But it is quite obvious that this set of problems cannot be reduced to one question, however important.

The character of the posing of the problems that philosophy is concerned with is theoretically determined, of course, by one answer or the other to the basic philosophical question. That enables one to understand in what sense this question is really basic. The identification of the subject-matter of philosophy with the basic philosophical question is apparently linked with the extremely general interpretation of the content of the latter. That interpretation is not legitimate, because it deprives the basic philosophical question of the place it occupies by right by distinctly formulating a definite dilemma.

The epistemology of dialectical materialism also cannot be reduced to its necessary, initial premiss, viz., the materialist answer to the second aspect of the basic philosophical question. The psychophysical problem differs essentially in its content from the basic philosophical question, since it presupposes investigation of the whole diversity of forms of the psychological in its relation to the diversity of the properties of the physiological. One must therefore not confuse the basic philosophical question with the whole problematic of the objectively existing 'spiritual-material' relation, the various forms of which are studied by several sciences. The basic philosophical question is one of the priority of one aspect of this relation. Its classical formulation, given by Engels, speaks only of 'which is primary: spirit or nature' (52:346).

Lenin stressed that the scientific meaning of Engels' formulation of the basic philosophical question was that it singled out from the whole diversity of the content of both materialism and idealism just that which theoretically predetermines their mutually exclusive opposition.

> Engels was right when he said that the essential thing is not which of the numerous schools of materialism or idealism a particular philosopher belongs to, but whether he takes nature, the external world, matter in motion, or spirit, reason, consciousness, etc., as primary (142:149).

In *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* he constantly stressed the need to delimit the basic philosophical question distinctly in order to formulate the alternative that no philosophical doctrine could avoid. In view of the importance in principle of delimiting the basic philosophical question and the whole domain of philosophical inquiry, I would cite another well-known statement of Lenin's:

> Whether nature, matter, the physical, the external world should be taken as primary, and consciousness, mind, sensation (experience—as the *widespread* terminology of our time has it), the psychical, etc., should be regarded as secondary—that is the root question which *in fact* continues to divide the philosophers into *two great camps* (142:315).

The materialist answer to the basic philosophical question is an initial theoretical proposition of materialism, which naturally does not include the whole wealth of that doctrine's ideas. Its identification with the subject-matter of philosophy is as unsound as all attempts to extend Lenin's philosophical definition of matter, the immense heuristic significance of which is, in particular, that it *excludes* all the attributes of matter from its philosophical definition, except one, which epistemologically constitutes its *differentia specifica*, so disclosing its opposition to consciousness and the dependence of the latter on it. Is it worth while demonstrating that any attempt to extend the philosophical definition of matter by including its physical, chemical and other attributes in it, only reveals incomprehension of the real sense of this definition?[2]

If the subject-matter of philosophy and the basic philosophical question were one and the same, then the former has not altered historically, in spite of radical socio-economic changes and great scientific discoveries. In that case either philosophy does not pose any new questions or their posing goes beyond its subject-matter. It would turn out that the subject-matter of philosophical inquiry had lost contact with the historical conditions that determine the development of philosophy and knowledge in general. The idealist illusion would be created

that philosophy exists independent of the events of its epoch, rises above them, and so on. A philosophy that occupied itself with one and the same question would ve wholly the prisoner of tradition, while its development in fact presupposes revision, and not just inheritance of tradition. Identification of the subject-matter of philosophy with the basic philosophical question indirectly, if not directly, rejects the development of philosophy, which is reduced in that case simply to various modifications of the basic philosophical question and various answers to it. But the development of philosophy presupposes the rise of new problems, research tasks, and fields of inquiry.

Identification of the subject-matter of philosophy with the basic philosophical question glossed over the qualitative difference between the philosophy of Marxism and preceding philosophy. The subject-matter of the former is the most general laws of the motion, change, and development of nature, society, and knowledge. The universal laws of men's changing both of the external world and of their social being also constitute the subject-matter of dialectical and historical materialism. The materialist answer to the basic question of philosophy theoretically predetermines the corresponding understanding of the most general laws of development. But to identify the two is to make a gross error."[3]

I have dwelt on what the basic philosophical question is not at such length that it may, perhaps, cause perplexity. Why do we call this question basic? And if it is not the subject-matter of philosophy, what is the sense of the adjective 'basic'? Will drawing a line between the subject-matter of philosophy and the basic philosophical question not lead to a belittling of the significance of the latter? These fears all merit close attention, and I shall try to show why it is the basic philosophical question that forms the most important philosophical dilemma, and why the materialist answer to it is one of the outstanding gains of philosophical thought. The task consists in getting clear about the specific nature of this question and its epistemological necessity, and finally, too, about the sense in which it nevertheless forms a problem, a problem of the history of philosophy.

2. Self-Awareness and the External World. The Epistemological Necessity of the Basic Philosophical Question

Philosophical analysis of any theoretical proposition calls for elucidation of its epistemological premisses. Kant correctly

called it dogmatism to reject an epistemological investigation of principles on the grounds that they were obvious. Hegel, who demonstrated that sensory reliability if sublated by theoretical analysis, by virtue of which philosophy should recognise only that as true which is obtained through the logical movement of a concept. The fact that both Kant and Hegel employed this epistemological imperative to criticise materialism and substantiate idealism does not discredit the principle itself; for Hegel employed dialectics to the same end.

Lenin called categories stages in the development of knowledge. Did he mean that cause and effect, essence and phenomenon, space and time did not exist independent of the process of knowing? Such a conclusion would be a subjective-idealist interpretation of the epistemological significance of categories.

The philosophy of Marxism rejects the metaphysical notion of unchangeable forms of knowledge, given once and for all, which prompted Kant to convert categories into a priori forms of sense contemplation and rational thought. Our concepts of causality, essence, space, etc., develop historically, and are enriched by a new content that not only supplements their old, accustomed content but also subjects it to dialectical negation. One should not, therefore, identify the concept of causality with the objectively existing relation of causality; the concept only reflects objective reality approximately. A change in the content of concepts and categories does not give grounds for denying the objective existence of what they reflect; Lenin criticised that mistake of subjective relativism in detail in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*.

In the first three chapters of that work, devoted to the epistemology of dialectical materialism, Lenin examined not only the process of knowing but also the categories usually called ontological. It was an epistemological analysis of causality, necessity, space, etc., that served as the basis for the conclusion about their objective content: the forms of thinking do not, of course, coincide with the forms of being, but they do reflect them. That conclusion rejects the metaphysical opposing of the epistemological and the ontological, and substantiates their unity. Analysis of the objective 'spiritual-material' relation must be approached from that angle, since it is it that forms the content of the basic philosophical question. What is its epistemological necessity? What is its origin? Why is it really a basic question and not a derivative one?

In my view, a most necessary condition of all conscious and purposive human activity, i.e. distinguishing between the subjec-

tive and the objective, forms the factual basis of the question of the relation of the spiritual and the material. Everyone (the idealist included) distinguishes himself from all others, and through that is conscious of himself as *I*, a human personality, an individuality. Perception of the surrounding world is impossible without consciousness of one's difference from the objects being perceived. Man's consciousness (if one abstracts from its elementary manifestations) is at the same time self-awareness, since no one would take it into his head to consider himself a tree, river, ass, or anything else that he perceives. And it follows from this that self-awareness is impossible simply as consciousness of one's Ego; it is realised through reflection of a reality independent of it.[4] Descartes, incidentally, did not know that when he tried to prove that only the doubting, thinking consciousness, or thought, was absolutely reliable, i.e. wholly excluded any doubts about its existence. He was mistaken, since he could not in principle assume that a condition of the self-obvious existence of self-awareness was a far from obvious link between doubt and the object of doubt, between thinking and being. He assumed that one could separate oneself from everything sensually perceivable, and throw doubt on its existence, but that it was impossible to doubt the reality of the intellectual operation itself that was effected in that way. He did not, however, ask: but is this intellectual operation possible irrespective of the external world? For denial of the external world presupposes some content known to thought, some thinkable fact that is declared in this case to be an illusion. That is why the line of demarcation between subject and object (irrespective of how the one and the other are understood) comes into any elementary act of human knowing and behaviour, insofar as it is performed consciously.

Unlike Descartes, Kant came to the conclusion that the self-evidence of consciousness of one's existence (albeit independent of perception of the external world) was essentially an illusion refuted by its latent (and denied) premiss, i.e. the fact of perception of the external world.

Kant added a short section 'Refutation of Idealism' to the second edition of *Critique of Pure Reason*—a reply to those of his critics who likened his system, not without grounds, to Berkeleianism and Humism. In this section he demonstrated that self-awareness was impossible without sense perception of the external world: *'The simple but empirically determined consciousness of my own existence proves the existence of external objects in space'* (116:170). He affirmed that inner

experience was only possible through external experience, so refuting the Cartesian thesis of the absolute reliability of self-awareness alone. The external world is also reliable, according to Kant, because 'the consciousness of my own existence is at the same time an immediate consciousness of the existence of other things without me' (116:171).

The idealist philosopher, of course, while demonstrating the need to demarcate the subjective from the objective, may then declare the difference between them to exist only for human consciousness or only in it. In that case, too, recognition of the external world is interpreted idealistically, i.e. is reduced to denial of the independence of reality from consciousness. That is what happened essentially with Kant, since, according to his doctrine, the sense-perceived world of phenomena posits an external, a priori form of sensory contemplation, which he defined as space. From that angle the external world (in contrast to the supersensory 'things-in-itself) is not formed without the involvement of human senses and a categorial, synthesis performed by reason. Still, Kant could not get along without demarcating the subjective from the objective, and without asking what was the relation of consciousness to what was not consciousness.

Idealism often reduces the objective to the subjective, makes a gulf between them or, on the contrary, identifies them. But it cannot ignore this difference, and likewise deny the existence of consciousness (and self-awareness), even when it interprets it as a simple appearance not unlike an ineradicable illusion about the independence of will from motives. Whatever the idealist's ideas about the essence of the subjective and the objective, and about the relation between them, he has to recognise their difference if only as directly given to consciousness or as established by it.

Neokantians have tried to reduce all sense-perceived, cognised, thinkable reality to constructs of logical thought, and products of scientific-theoretical or artistic creation. In other words they have made an attempt to eliminate being and objective reality, and to interpret them as special modes of the existence of consciousness. Rickert claimed that the objects of knowing 'are then my ideas, perceptions, sensations, and expressions of my will', i.e. the content of consciousness, while the subject of knowing 'is that which is aware of what this content is' (221:13). But in order to distinguish the content of consciousness from awareness of it, he in fact restored the difference between consciousness and being, declaring that

consciousness, the content of which generates objects, is a universal, supraindividual consciousness, although it also only exists in human individuals. That forced him to establish a difference of principle between the empirical subject and its direct, subjective consciousness, and the epistemological subject, whose consciousness is impersonal and in that sense objective. The theoretical source of this conception was the doctrines of Kant and Fichte.

The concepts of the subjective and objective, whatever content is ascribed to them, form a dichotomy such as makes it possible to mentally grasp everything that exists, everything possible, and everything conceivable, and also, consequently, what does not exist anywhere except in fantasy. One can always attribute any one phenomenon to the objective or the subjective. It is another matter that people can disagree with one another about *what* to consider objective and *what* subjective. They may take the objective for the subjective and vice versa. This is done by some idealists, in particular, who interpret the objective as some sort of relation between phenomena of consciousness, i.e. as an immanent characteristic of the subjective. But in that case the dividing line between the subjective and the objective is maintained, in spite of the subjectivist interpretation.

Neopositivists declare the concept 'objective reality' a term without scientific sense. But they, too, call for a strict demarcation between the subjective and 'intersubjective' or, as Bertrand Russell expressed it, between the personal and the 'social'. While disregarding objective reality the neopositivist nevertheless strives to retain the counterposing of the objective to the subjective, since denial of this fundamental difference makes it impossible to draw a line between knowledge and ignorance, truth and error.

One must note, incidentally, that there are also those among philosophers who dispute the epistemological significance in principle of the dichotomy of the subjective and objective, who try to set some third thing, differing from subject and object, from consciousness and being, above them both, this something forming the original essence as it were, in which nothing is yet divided or differentiated. Thus, according to Schelling's doctrine, the supreme first principle is neither subjective nor objective, since it is absolute identity free of all differences, the unconscious state of the world spirit. Nevertheless, with Schelling, too, this absolute indifferentiation was divided into subjective and objective as a consequence of the self-differentiation caused by an unconscious inclination and blind will. And

these concepts became universal characteristics of everything that existed in nature and society.

In the latest idealist philosophy a tendency predominates to demarcate the subject and object; this is particularly characteristic of both existentialism and Husserl's phenomenology. Husserl thought it necessary to 'factor out' the external world, i.e. nature and society, on the one hand, and on the other consciousness, at least in the form in which it is registered not only by everyday observation but also by psychology. Next he set about describing the genuine reality, to be called ideal being or (what is the same thing) pure consciousness. Ideal being was neither subjective nor objective because it was absolute. But in contrast to the Platonic realm of transcendental archetypes, Husserl's ideal being was not to be found beyond human life but in human consciousness itself, though independent of the latter. Where Plato ascribed a timeless, other-world existence to ideas, Husserl's '*eide*' or intuitively comprehended phenomenological essences, have no existence in general, at least not a necessary one. Existence, according to Husserl's doctrine, is an empirical determinacy, which cannot be inherent in the absolute, and in particular in truth, the good, and beauty. Sense, meaning, and value are inherent in the absolute. Husserl's ideal being is thus quite similar to the Neokantian world of absolute values, which do not exist but have meaning as criteria of any empirical existence.

Husserl's doctrine about the intensionality of consciousness was also aimed at overcoming the 'dualism' of subjective and objective, which, in his opinion, was to be achieved by bringing out the immanence of the object in consciousness. Since pure consciousness is meant here, consciousness was independent of the external object; it had it, in fact, not as empirical reality, but as an inner intension inherent in itself. The object was therefore not something that was outside consciousness; consciousness 'intensioned' the object, i.e. discovered it (recalled it, recognised it, as it were, if one appealed to Plato) within itself. Consciousness and the object—the subjective and the objective—prove in the end to be one and the same, because consciousness is objective as a consequence of intensionality and so free of subjectivity, while the object, through its 'ideative character', i.e. its intensional givenness, is free of objectivity.

It may seem that Husserl in fact succeeded (though through idealist mystification) in eliminating the epistemological necessity of separating the subjective and the objective, since he treated phenomenological ideal being as outside both. But that

impression is deceptive, since the earlier rejected opposition of the subjective and the objective was imperceptibly restored in Husserl's counterposing of the ideal and the empirical. The empirical (both being and consciousness) is defined as purely subjective, illusory, imaginary, and ideal being (or pure consciousness) as absolutely objective with no relation whatsoever with the being and consciousness with which human existence, natural science, and practice are connected.

Husserl thus repeated the mistake of those idealists who declare the real imaginary and the imaginary the only existent, and who, confusing subjective and objective idealism, assume that they have done away with all the extremes of subjectivism and objectivism.

Existentialism made Husserl's phenomenology the basis of its ontology of human existence. Since rational, conceptual thought (from the standpoint of the existentialist) cannot be the authentic (existential) mode of human existence, existentialism condemns the counterposing of consciousness to being and of the subject to the object as a superficial and essentially false orientation that excludes man from being and so distorts both being and human existence. Existentialism calls for the inclusion of man in being. That does not, in general, mean that the existentialist protests against treating the human individual outside his relation to nature and social being. Neither the one nor the other interests him much in essence; following Husserl he factors out the empirical being about which everyday observations and the sciences speak. To include man in being means to treat human existence as the key to solving the puzzle of being. While stressing that being, at least for man, manifests itself only in human existence, the existentialist at the same time fences man off from being, declaring that the latter is never comprehended as being but always only as what exists, as material. Consciousness, by constantly going outside itself (transcending, in the existentialist's terminology), therefore does not penetrate being, and remains alienated from it; it can never become being just as being cannot become consciousness.

This counterposing of consciousness as 'being for itself to 'being in itself' is particularly clearly expressed in the doctrine of Jean-Paul Sartre. The counterposing of the two is absolute. 'Being in itself does not know temporality, destruction, suffering; all these categories characterise only 'human reality', whose nature consists in limitless subjectivity and mortality. 'It is we who will destroy ourselves, and the earth will remain in its lethargy until another consciousness arrives to awaken

if (236:90). True, in his *Critique de la raison dialectique*, Sartre stresses the relativity of the opposition between the subjective and the objective: the subject is constantly being externalised, i.e. passes from the inside to the outside, but the object is continuously being internalised, i.e. being assimilated by the subject. The dialectic of the subject and object does not, however (according to Sartre), eliminate the mutual alienation of 'being for itself' and 'being in itself; it is constantly revived and reinforced because the objective, since it is objective, is absolutely outside consciousness, which is essentially only 'consciousness of consciousness' and, moreover, 'nothing', since it does not contain anything in itself that is inherent in 'being in itself'.

Existentialism, which set itself the task of overcoming the 'split' between subject and object, thus deepens the opposition of subjective and objective in fact, since it interprets it subjectively and anti-dialectically. But the conclusion already drawn above follows from that, viz., that it is impossible in principle to eliminate the question of the relation of consciousness to being, and of the subjective to the objective. The whole disagreement about the nature of the relation between them presupposes this demarcation and, to some extent, the counterposing.

Consciousness of the necessity of this demarcation (and even counterposing) does not, of course, coincide with recognition of the existence of the spiritual and the material. Vulgar materialists did not recognise the existence of the spiritual, i.e. wholely reduced it to the material. Subjective idealists on the contrary denied the existence of matter, calling it simply a bundle of sensations. Some idealists claimed that consciousness and the spiritual did not exist at all, and reduced the objective content of consciousness to physiological reactions. None of these views, however, affected the epistemological basis of the question that Engels called the supreme one of all philosophy; they referred only to interpretation of this basis.

The divergences in the interpretation of the 'spiritual-material' relation give rise to different ways of posing the basic philosophical question, and also to denial of its real significance. These differences and the converted forms of the basic philosophical question connected with them merit special study, without which our view of the course of the history of philosophy will be schematic. But it is necessary first of all to recognise that the difference between consciousness and being, and subjective and objective, is an objective one, existing

independently of consciousness. Consciousness is a function of the brain, but both the brain and consciousness only exist insofar as they relate to the external world with which man interacts. Experimental research has shown that when a person is put in a situation that maximally excludes the effect of countless stimuli on him (most of them not even realised) he suffers emotional and psychic disturbances to the point of hallucinations and paranoid symptoms. The cause of these disturbances of consciousness is the limitation of the number of sensory stimuli or sensory hunger (see 74). Thus the sensualist principle: *Nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu* (nothing is in the mind that was not in the senses) is supported in both the epistemological and anthropological aspects. One must not, of course, take that old dictum literally; sense data are not simply perceived or reproduced by consciousness. Consciousness is founded on sense perceptions of the external world, and on all practical sensual activity; and there is no consciousness (and knowledge) without sense reflection of objective reality. It is that (but not only that alone, as I shall show later) which makes the question of the relation of consciousness and being, and of the spiritual and the material, the basic philosophical question.

Thus, since man possesses consciousness, he is aware of the world around him and distinguishes himself from the things he is conscious of, he finds himself in a situation that is fixed and formulated by the basic philosophical question. Philosophers have not invented this question; it has grown from all human practice, and the history of knowledge, but it does not follow from this that we are aware of it precisely as a question, let alone as a philosophical one and, moreover, the basic one.

Marx and Engels wrote: 'Consciousness (*das Bewusstsein)* can never be anything else than conscious being (*das bewusste Sein*), and the being of men is their actual life-process' (176:36). This is not only a definite posing of (and answer to) the basic philosophical question but is also a direct indication of the main facts from which this question stems.

The idealist, or idealistically thinking physiologist and psychologist, do not, of course, agree, with such a materialist interpretation of the relation of consciousness and being, of the psychic and the material. They try to counter it with an idealist answer to the basic philosophical question. But in this case, too, they cannot eliminate the direct or indirect demarcation of consciousness and what is cognised, i.e. being, the actual process of human life, about which the founders of Marxism spoke of

in the quotation above. And it is impossible to refrain here from a question that has already suggested itself earlier, viz., why can't philosophy start immediately and directly with investigation of the reality that constitutes the basis of human life, i.e. with man himself, who is undoubtedly the most interesting and important object of inquiry for himself? Why cannot theoretical analysis of the most important vital relations of man and the world of things (relations that cannot, of course, be reduced just to awareness of being) be treated as the main, really most important philosophical question as philosophers suggest who hold that the relation of thinking and being, of the spiritual and material, is too abstract a question to be considered the main one? For the spiritual, insofar as it is thought of in the most general, undifferentiated form, is an abstraction, existing only in thought. And matter, too, as a concept that integrates an infinite aggregate of phenomena, is also an abstraction. Berkeley, interpreting it from a subjective--idealist and nominalist position, declared it an empty abstraction, as the name of an object that did not in fact exist. A similar, but much more sophisticated attempt at discrediting not only matter but also the basic philosophical question has been made in our time by Bertrand Russell, who wrote that matter and consciousness were essentially conventional concepts, and that it was as senseless to defend the primacy of matter or consciousness in face of the latest scientific data as to dispute about which hangs above and which below, the Sun or Earth (see 230). By 'the latest scientific data', he meant the theory of behaviourism, which endeavoured to eliminate consciousness.

We now see the epistemological source of the arguments that the basic question of philosophy is not, actually, the basic one because its content is formed by abstractions and not by actual (human and natural) reality. A clearly oversimplified understanding of the concrete as the subject-matter of philosophic inquiry is characteristic of all these arguments. In that regard Konstantinov has correctly noted:

> An understanding of the concrete as empirical datum has become quite common among us. ...But it should not be forgotten that in Marxism there is another, deeper understanding of the concrete, which is reproduceable in theory and is the result of knowledge (121:17)

But, in order to understand the epistemological essence of the basic philosophical question precisely in this 'abstract' form of it, it is necessary to take full account of the pattern of the ascent from the abstract to the concrete in the course of theoretical inquiry.

One cannot begin to investigate any concrete, complex phenomenon from its theoretical reproduction in concepts. If that were possible science would have been able to solve its tasks by the shortest route, i.e. from the concrete in reality to the concrete in thought. But the concrete in reality can only be the object of contemplation and not of scientific understanding, and any attempt to express the contemplated directly in concepts generates only empty abstractions. The concrete in science is built up from scientific abstractions. It is a unity of various definitions, each of which inevitably has an abstract, one-sided character. Science therefore begins investigation of the concrete by breaking it down into separate parts, aspects, forms, and relations. Science creates abstractions that reflect these essential factors of the concrete, and analyses the relations between these abstractions, because the real complexity, and many-sidedness of the concrete, and the contradictions, changes, and development proper to it, are reflected in them.

Whoever begins an inquiry from a survey of the concrete whole, the component parts, aspects, and premisses of which are still unknown to him, in essence begins with an empty abstraction. The concrete in theoretical thought, Marx pointed out,

> appears ... in reasoning as a summing-up, a result, and not as the starting point, although it is the real point of origin, and thus also the point of origin of perception and imagination (166:206)

We employ this conclusion—the result of a materialist reworking of the Hegelian idealist conception—not just in political economy but also in other sciences, though not, obviously, in all. The Aristotelian notion of the velocity of free-falling bodies (according to their shape, weight, etc.) is a naive (historically naive, i.e. inevitable) attempt to comprehend a complex process. Galileo took another route, when formulating the law of fall of bodies. He was aware of the necessity of abstraction and rejected the weight and shape of the falling body, for which he had naturally to assume (also an abstraction!) that bodies fall in a vacuum. Aristotle could not, with his 'concrete' approach to the problem, formulate a law of fall of bodies. Galileo, taking the route of scientific abstraction, discovered this law (abstract, it is true) which, however, reflected the real process of the uniformly accelerated motion of falling bodies fairly correctly, i.e. within certain limits. Aerodynamics cannot, of course, be restricted to application of Galileo's law; in it a need arises to synthesise scientific abstractions that by no means reflect the process of falling in an airless medium, and that

allow for the weight and shape of the falling body; the task of this concrete knowledge of the process is resolved within the context of these scientific disciplines. In this connection, however, Galileo's law retains its significance within certain empirically fixed limits, the more so that at great altitudes the rarefaction of the atmosphere corresponds approximately to the abstraction of an airless medium introduced by Galileo, which consequently reveals its objective content.

Thus, when examining the basic philosophical question from the angle of the development of scientific, theoretical knowledge, we come to the conclusion that it forms the starting point of philosophical inquiry. I shall try to confirm this conclusion in the following sections of this chapter.

3. On the Origin and Development of the Basic Philosophical Question

I said above that the basic philosophical question is answered by the whole development of materialist philosophy; there are no grounds for revising that answer. All the same, this question still remains a problem in one very essential respect; namely, a problem of the history of philosophy. Its rise did not coincide with the origin of philosophy[5]; its history, which covers thousands of years, characterises the development of philosophical knowledge in a specific way.

There is a multitude of philosophical questions that prove to be modifications of the basic one, which is by no means directly obvious and is only established through inquiry. Let me clarify this idea by a comparison. Marx proved that the price of production is a specific modification of value (in the conditions of developed capitalism), although it functions directly as its negation, this direct relation existing, moreover, not only in ordinary consciousness but also in objective reality. Is there not such a relation between the basic philosophical question and the other numerous problems of philosophy?

Engels considered that primitive religious beliefs already contained a certain notion about the relation of the psychic and the physical, the soul and the body. Primitive primordial consciousness inevitably recorded the difference between waking and sleeping, between a living and a dead creature, a man and an animal. This difference was not simply ascertained as a consequence of curiosity (though that undoubtedly was inherent in our remote ancestors; for it is inherent in animals

that are at a much lower level of development, and is probably a necessary precondition of progress in the animal kingdom). The establishing of this fact is an expression of a practical attitude to the external world, because man treated the roused and the sleeping, the living and the dead, differently. Primitive men were obviously not inclined to reflection; they did not ask what distinguished the living from the dead, the roused from the sleeping. Nevertheless certain ideas about this difference arose, and were manifested not as answers to questions that had not yet been formulated, but as spontaneously built-up notions. When questions originated and new notions became answers, that was already evidence that reflection had begun on facts that had previously been accepted without questioning.

The first explanations of the established facts obviously could not be based on an exact description of them; a cognitive capacity of that kind took shape comparatively late. The primitive explanation only indicated that the sleeping or even dead person differed from the roused (and living) one not in his body, but in something else, i.e. in the absence of something incorporeal that living, waking creatures had. This unknown later began to be called spirit or soul.

The soul did not immediately begin to be represented as immaterial, because bodilessness, as philological and ethnographic research witness, was initially understood as the absence of a certain physical form; air and wind, for example, were considered to be incorporeal. Spirit and soul therefore seemed a rather special, very fine substance. That point of view was subsequently substantiated by the materialists of antiquity to counterbalance the then arising spiritualist view of the spiritual.

One must also remember that, although the notion of the difference between a living and dead creature took shape very early under the influence of urgent practical need, it was a very vague notion, so that the boundaries between the living and the non-living (inanimate) were only realised within very narrow limits. Primitive men seemingly judged the things around them by analogy with themselves, i.e. they transferred their own capacities that they were aware of to all or nearly all phenomena of nature. The habit of measuring by one's own yardstick was the first heuristic orientation, from which stemmed the humanising (or rather, perhaps, animating) of everything that existed. The inanimate could only be imagined as the previously living, and that, of course, presupposed a very expanded understanding of life. In short, the primitive outlook on the world was seemingly organismic.

The question of the relation of consciousness to being, and of the spiritual to the material, could thus only be consciously posed when the development of a capacity for disengagement, self-observation, and analysis had reached a comparatively high level. If the origin of the initial religious ideas presupposed the shaping of an abstracting power of thought (which is revealed in all its obviousness in religious fantasy), how much the more that applies to philosophical ideas, however primitive.[6]

Philosophy, as is evidenced by the historical facts, only arose at that stage of social development when private property, a stratification into classes, a social division of labour, and, what is particularly vital, an opposition between intellectual activity and the production of material goods already existed. As the founders of Marxism pointed out:

> From this moment onwards consciousness *can* really flatter itself that it is something other than consciousness of existing practice, that it *really* represents something without representing something real; from now on consciousness is in a position to emancipate itself from the world and to proceed to the formation of 'pure' theory, theology, philosophy, morality, etc. (178:45).

That kind of forgetfulness of its origin and real content is manifested as consciousness's conviction that it does not reflect sensually perceived reality but a special essence differing radically not only from what it perceives but also from what constitutes its corporeal, material basis.

In Greek philosophy a system of idealist views was first created by Plato. It is not difficult to disclose a process in his doctrine of ideas of the shaping of an idealist outlook on the world. In Greek the word 'idea' signified form, appearance, image. Plato interpreted form and image as something independent of a thing and even preceding it. From the very start idealism distorted the sense of already formed concepts. But it did not simply invent and make things up; it interpreted the act of creation, in which the ideal image preceded its embodiment, universally and ontologically. Analogy, having become a principle of the explanation of phenomena, led to idealism, which came out, for example, in Aristotle's doctrine.[7]

The opposition of materialism and idealism is thus clearly traced out only at the pinnacle of the development of Greek philosophy. But there was still no conscious posing then of the basic philosophical question, which was paradoxical since idealism and materialism were already giving opposing answers to this question. How could answers be possible to a question

that had not yet been posed or formulated? To answer that historical paradox it is necessary to concretise our understanding of the origin of the counterposing of the main philosophical trends.

Investigation of the epistemological necessity of the basic philosophical question brings out the theoretical sources of the polarisation of philosophy into two mutually exclusive trends. But one must not oversimplify the historical process of the forming of this opposition, i.e. consider the peculiar content of the basic philosophical question, a content that implicitly includes the inevitability of two diametrically opposite answers, the cause of the rise of materialism and idealism. Like any other phenomenon of social consciousness the forming of the opposition of materialism and idealism was due in the final count to historically determined social relations. As for the theoretical grounds of the radical antithesis of materialism and idealism, they took shape after these trends had arisen. Their formation testified that the split in philosophy had become generally recognised, which called for theoretical explanation. It goes without saying that the socio-economic conditioning of the polarisation of philosophical trends did not in the least lessen the role of the basic philosophical question in the system of internally mutually connected philosophical views.

All these considerations enable one to understand Engels' conclusion more profoundly: the basic philosophical question

> could achieve its full significance, only after humanity in Europe had awakened from the long hibernation of the Christian Middle Ages (52:346).

It is hardly necessary to demonstrate that in an age when religion was practically the masses' sole spiritual food, the very posing of the question of which existed first, matter or spirit, was perceived as an infringement of the holy of holies, for, according to the scholastic definition, God was the physical and moral cause of everything that existed. That same scholasticism also taught that the highest cannot arise from the lowest. Matter was interpreted as the source of every kind of deformation and monstrosity, as the element from which arose worms, bugs, lice, etc. (not without the help of the devil). Even the mediaeval philosophers who were close to materialism had not, as a rule, broken completely with the doctrine of creationism. The idea of the co-eternity of nature and God signified a revolutionary challenge to the prevailing ideology. Whole historical epochs were thus needed for the development of

philosophical thought before the basic philosophical question took on all its actual significance.

The bourgeois transformation of social relations, the liquidation of the Church's spiritual dictatorship, and the emancipation of philosophy from the shackles of theology completed the historical process of the forming and confirmation of the question of the relation of consciousness and being, of the spiritual and the material, as the basic philosophical question, giving it a definite content that could only be analysed by appeal to facts. Engels linked this historical process directly with the struggle against the Middle Ages:

> The question of the position of thinking in relation to being, a question which, by the way, had played a great part also in the scholasticism of the Middle Ages, the question: which is primary, spirit or nature—that question, in relation to the church, was sharpened into this: Did God create the world or has the world been in existence eternally? (52:346).

It would be naive, however, to suppose that a correct *theoretical* understanding of the basic philosophical question took shape (and was generally accepted) in philosophy from that time. There is no doubt that the development and realisation of the radical opposition of materialism and idealism, and the conscious counterposing of the main philosophical trends to one another, characteristic of classical bourgeois philosophy, fostered the shaping of this understanding and frequently came close to it. But the fact that the opposition of materialism and idealism developed within the context of one and the same bourgeois ideology created certain difficulties for bringing out the whole depth and ideological significance of this antithesis of ideas. Only the creation of the dialectical-materialist conception of the historical course of philosophy made it possible to fully reveal the real sense and significance of the basic question of philosophy.

4. The Basic Philosophical Question: Objective Content and Subjective Form of Expression. The Real Starting Point of Philosophical Inquiry

It is necessary, in the history of philosophy, more than in any other discipline that studies the development of knowledge and performs a certain ideological function in the class struggle, to draw a line between the *objective* content of philosophical doctrines and their subjective, often even arbitrary form of

expression. This is a most important principle of inquiry in the history of philosophy, which is based directly on the initial proposition of historical materialism about the relation of social consciousness and social being. Because of that, consciousness as awareness of being is by no means an adequate reflection; knowledge, at any rate in its developed and systematic form, presupposes inquiry. In philosophy, insofar as it is, on the one hand, investigation, and on the other awareness of historically determined social being, there is constantly a contradiction between its objective content and subjective form of expression. This contradiction is only overcome by Marxism, which has created a scientific, philosophical world outlook that is at the same time a scientific ideology.[8]

The drawing of a line between the objective content and subjective form of philosophical doctrines is thus a dialectical-materialist principle of scientific inquiry. Marx and Engels constantly applied and developed this principle they had formulated. Their attitude to Hegel is particularly indicative in this sense, since there is perhaps no other philosopher for whom they had such a high regard and whom they so sharply criticised. This attitude, at first glance inconsistent, was in fact a consistent drawing of a line between the objectively true in Hegel's doctrine, and the subjective in it, often even inimical to his own outstanding philosophical discoveries. In reference to Hegel's dialectic, for instance, Marx said: 'This dialectic is, to be sure, the ultimate word in philosophy and hence there is all the more need to divest it of the mystical aura given it by Hegel' (173:316). Further on, in the same letter to Lassalle, Marx said, speaking of his own dissertation on Epicurus, that in it he had himself attempted

> the portrayal of a complete system from fragments, a system which I am convinced, by the by, was—as with Heraclitus—only *implicitly* present in (Epicurus') work, not consciously as a system. Even in the case of philosophers who give systematic form to their work, Spinoza for instance, the true inner structure of the system is quite unlike the form in which it was consciously presented by him (*ibid.*).

If one had said to Spinoza that the theoretical starting point of his system was a materialist answer to the question of the relation of the spiritual and material, he would not, judging from the inner structure and exposition of his system, have agreed with that characterisation of his doctrine. Neither matter (extent) nor the spiritual (thought) were in any causal relationship, according to his doctrine; they constituted attributes of a single (and sole) substance. Nature as a whole was

called God, contrary to Christian theology, which absolutely counterposed the divine to the earthly. Spinoza's system was essentially an atheistic doctrine, a materialist pantheism, that differed in principle from the idealist pantheism developed by several Neoplatonists, and in modern times by the occasionalists (Malebranche, Geulincx), and to a certain extent also by Hegel. In delimiting the objective content and subjective mode of expression in Spinoza's doctrine, Marx stressed the need to differentiate between 'what Spinoza considered the keystone of his system and what in fact constitutes it' (181:506). The objective content of Spinoza's doctrine is incomparably richer, more significant, and more original than what he consciously formulated as his basic conviction.

I have dwelt in rather more detail than may seem necessary on setting out one of the most important principles of the Marxian analysis of the history of philosophy, since this helps explain why philosophers who have posed the basic philosophical question and given it a quite definite answer, were not conscious, as a rule, that it was in fact a matter of the basic philosophical question. They were not concerned with investigating its origin and its relation to its varied themata and problematic, so important for distinguishing philosophic doctrines from one another. Philosophers have often called quite other problems basic in general in their doctrines and in philosophy. That point has been noted by Lyakhovetsky and Tyukhtin in their entry 'The Basic Question of Philosophy' in the Soviet *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy,* where they say in particular:

> Helvetius considered the basic question of philosophy to be that of the essence of human happiness, Rousseau the question of social inequality and ways of overcoming it, Bacon the question of extension of man's power over nature by inventions, etc. (154:172).

But it follows from a concrete analysis of those philosophers' doctrines that what they called basic in their teaching did not form its chief, *initial* theoretical proposition or principle determining the *direction* of their philosophic inquiry; it was a matter rather of the sense and humanist purpose of the philosophy, and of the philosophic problems that each of them represented as the most important.[9]

I do not see negations of the basic philosophical question in these philosophers, or attempts to counterpose some other one to it. But there is no epistemological analysis in them of the initial theoretical premisses of their own doctrines, and that prevents understanding of the sense in which the question I am concerned with is really basic. As soon as this epistemo-

logical approach is outlined, the philosopher begins to formulate his real starting point more or less consciously.

Kant's proposition cited above, about the self-obviousness of the existence of self-awareness posited perception of the external world and so recognition of its existence. Having drawn that important conclusion, however, Kant rejected the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question and took up a dualist position akin to Cartesianism. Philosophy had to begin with the recognition of consciousness, on the one hand, and on the other of a reality (the 'thing in itself) independent of it. The question of the existence of a causal connection between them could not be decided, and therefore neither the subject nor the object, taken separately, could become the starting point of philosophy. Fichte's basic statement against that solution of the problem of the fundamental position boiled down to affirming that philosophy had to deduce the necessity of facts from its adopted fundamental position rather than ascertaining them empirically. There were consequently only two routes: either to take the object as initial and deduce the subject from it or, taking the subject as initial, to deduce the object from it. Fichte said categorically:

> One of the two, spirit or nature, must be eliminated; the two are by no means unitable. Their seeming union is partly hypocrisy and lies, partly an inconsistency imposed through inner feeling (60:32).

Consciousness of the necessity of the basic philosophical question, and an understanding of the inevitability of the dilemma and of its alternative answer, are to be seen in this categoricalness of Fichte's. Since he answered it in a subjectively idealist way, he called for elimination of one of the opposites, namely, nature. The opposite approach (elimination of spirit), be called 'transcendental materialism', suggesting that any materialism transformed reality into something suprasensory, because the whole, sensually perceivable world, in his conviction, presupposed the existence of a subject

Schelling criticised Fichte for his subjective-idealist, essentially negative interpretation of nature.

> For him nature is an abstract concept—denoting a mere barrier—of the not-I, the wholly void object in which nothing whatever is perceivable except just that it confronts the subject (240:110).

The objective idealist Schelling, armed with the achievements of the natural science of his day, developed a dialectical philosophy of nature, well aware that the objective could not

be reduced to the subjective. The opposite view, i.e. the materialist, was also unacceptable to him. A return to the Kantian point of view was hopeless because it dismissed the problem. So Schelling modified the basic philosophical problem. It was no longer one of the relation of subject and object, since the difference between them was not primary. The rise of this difference witnessed to the birth of consciousness, but if consciousness had not always existed, did it not follow that materialism was true? Schelling rejected that conclusion, substantiating the fundamental idealist principle, viz., that consciousness was the product of the self-development and self-differentiation of the unconscious world spirit. But why did the unconscious divide into two, generating its opposite, consciousness? Schelling's philosophy of nature could not answer that.

Hegel, inheriting the most valuable ideas of his idealist predecessors, rejected both the Fichtean reduction of the object to the subject and Schelling's conception of absolute identity without inner difference. The metaphysical abstraction of absolute identity essentially did not work, as Hegel showed; while there was this identity, in which every determinacy disappeared, there was no world, and as soon as the world manifested itself, absolute identity disappeared. In opposition to Schelling, Hegel showed that substantial identity was dialectical, and by virtue of that initially contained the difference between the subjective and the objective. Hegel formulated the initial proposition of philosophy as the relation of thought and being, whose unity was the 'absolute idea'. He came fully to a conscious formulation of the basic philosophical question when he wrote that 'spirit and nature, thought and being, are the two infinite sides of the Idea' (85:III, 161), a unity of which all philosophical doctrines strove to achieve. Continuing his idea, he wrote:

> Philosophy hence falls into the two main forms in which the opposition is resolved, into a realistic and an idealistic system of philosophy, i.e. into one which makes the objectivity and the content of thought to arise from the perceptions, and one which proceeds to truth from the independence of thought (85:III, 162).

Hegel consequently saw the necessary character of the opposition between materialism (realism, in his terminology) and idealism, and found its sources in reality itself, the main determinations of which, in his doctrine, were thought and being.[10]

Feuerbach was more aware than other pre-Marxian materialists of the many-sided content of the struggle between

materialism and idealism. Anthropological materialism arose during the disintegration of German classical idealism and, for all its opposition to the doctrines of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, was their natural completion. Feuerbach fought against the most developed, significant, profound idealist doctrines that had ever existed in history. We find in him a thorough critical analysis of the speculative-idealist answer to the basic philosophical question. He traced how Hegel, converting thought into the subject and being into the predicate, stood the real relation on its head. The Hegelian deduction of nature from the 'absolute idea', as Feuerbach explained, by no means proved that nature was implicitly contained in this idea; if there were no nature it would be impossible to 'deduce' it from the supernatural. It was necessary, consequently, to return from speculative constructs to the facts, whose existence was obvious to everyone; nature existed, man existed, *human* thought existed. And he who also discarded the notion of a supernatural spirit together with theological prejudices thus planted the question of the relation of the spiritual and material in real, *human* soil. Insofar as philosophy answered the question of the relation of thought and being, it must be anthropology, i.e. a doctrine of man, whose existence formed the actual resolution of this problem. 'The *unity* of *thought* and *being*,' he wrote, 'has *sense* and *truth* only when *man* composes the *basis,* the *subject of this unity*' (57:339).

Feuerbach thus reduced the basic philosophical question to that of man, and the relation of the psychic and physical. This was a narrowing of the problem, but at the same time a concretisation of it, since it was in his time that natural science had provided adequate proof that thought was a function of the brain, i.e. of matter organised in a special way.

The idealist who is compelled by physiology to recognise this fact does not, of course, reject his convictions thereby; he endeavours to find a spiritual first principle outside human existence, pleading that the dependence of the spiritual on the physical in the structure of human existence must itself have arisen from (and be explained by) something else, not only supernatural but also superhuman. Feuerbach, being conscious of the inevitability of such objections to materialism, argued that study of nature did not reveal the necessity for the existence of a supernatural and was not evidence, even indirectly, of its presence. Any supernaturalist explanation of the origin of the psychic was therefore quite without grounds.

> How can man arise from nature, i.e. the spirit from matter? [he wrote]. First of all, answer me *this* question: how can matter arise from spirit? If you do not find any, in the least reasonable answer to that question, you will apprehend that only the contrary question will lead you to the goal (56:179).

Feuerbach was thus conscious of the difficulties standing in the way of a systematic proof of the materialist position on the essence and origin of the spiritual. But these difficulties were those of scientific study, while the contrary idealist thesis was not only unprovable but also incompatible in principle with a scientific posing of the problem. The idealist interpretation of the relation between the spiritual and material was, as Feuerbach showed, essentially theological:

> The question whether a God created the world, the question of the relation actually of God to the world, is one of the relation of the spirit to sensuality, of the general or abstract to the real, of the species to the individual; this question belongs to the most important and at the same time most difficult ones of human knowledge and philosophy, and, as has already become clear, the whole history of philosophy virtually turns on it (57:136).

Lenin, citing this passage, compared it with Engels's formulation of the basic philosophical question (144:70). We see that Feuerbach, to an even greater extent than Hegel, expressed a profound understanding of this question. Consequently, at this point, too, German classical philosophy was a direct forerunner of dialectical and historical materialism.

Thus, over many centuries, philosophy proceeded, in its theoretical self-determination, from one answer or other to the basic philosophical question, without being aware of the fact, sometimes even coming close to a correct appreciation of it. The explanation of this contradiction is to be found, on the one hand, in nature, in the genesis of the basic philosophical question, and on the other hand in the general patterns of development of theoretical knowledge.

Science always attains understanding of its theoretical foundations, and of the principles by which it is in fact guided, by very complicated paths. Contrary to the ordinary view scientific principles are not so much the starting point of the development of a science as a result of that development. In other words, before the principles become methodological directives they must be brought out through comprehension of the results of scientific development. As Mamardashvili has correctly noted:

> There is no unilinearity of development and continuity in the history of science and philosophy, identical to the logical course of thought in

> a theoretical system. The development of knowledge proceeds in the form of a mass of lines that embrace the subject and go deep into it from various aspects. Philosophy (and science) develops on different 'planes', and singles out aspects of the subject of different complexity and depth simultaneously, and reflection of these aspects develops as a whole (160:180-181).

The development of each science is built up from two main, qualitatively different, though ultimately interconnected processes, i.e. increase in knowledge about the objects that it studies, and investigation of its own theoretical foundations. Inquiries of the latter type are usually late, i.e. are only begun at that stage of a science's development when contradictions in its fundamental theoretical principles come to light that had hitherto seemed incontrovertible.

A person who is not engaged in scientific work usually imagines the development of science as harmoniously occurring process. He thinks that scientific problems arise and are resolved in a strict order of priority and corresponding sequence (to begin with, the simplest tasks are tackled, then more complicated ones, and a new matter is not taken up until the old one has been finished with). He pictures the proliferation of scientific knowledge as something like the erection of a multistoreyed building; first a solid foundation is laid, in the constructing of which it is already known in advance how many storeys are to be erected. Then the floors are added one after another (again in strict sequence), after which, the interior finishing of the building is completed. Since science is probably the most planned, purposeful, theoretically comprehended form of human activity, the existence of spontaneity in its development seems, if not unnatural, at least irregular, improper, and undesirable, although many scientific discoveries have been made more or less by chance, while the results of research (in contrast to those of other labour processes) cannot be anticipated in advance; we cannot know today what we shall know tomorrow. Each researcher is aware of his own activity, and of the research techniques he employs, but there is an immense gulf between these notions (often, moreover, subjective and superficial) and understanding of the principles and theoretical foundations of the science. Only through the accumulation and development of knowledge, and the rise of incompatible conceptions, contradictions, and paradoxes within the context of a definite science is its real theoretical foundation brought out, and illusions dispersed about convictions uncritically adopted as axioms or even as facts that it was enough

simply to state, since they were obvious. As Karl Marx said:

> The historical progress of all sciences leads only through a multitude of contradictory moves to the real point of departure. Science, unlike other architects, builds not only castles in the air, but may construct separate habitable storeys of the building before laying the foundation stone (166:57).

It is therefore not surprising that the basic philosophical question—which is really the theoretical point of departure of all more or less systematically developed philosophical doctrines—could be scientifically comprehended, formulated, and, if you please, even discovered only at that historical stage when the main trends in philosophy had been fully singled out, and when it had become more or less obvious that they were materialism and idealism.

Scientific understanding of the nature of philosophic knowledge presupposes investigation of the genesis of the basic philosophical question and of its place in the development of philosophy. The contradiction between the objective content of philosophical systems and the subjective form of their construction and exposition must not only be explained but also resolved by way of a distinct, scientific demarcation of the point of theoretical departure (answer to the basic philosophical question) and the theoretical principle and initial thesis of the doctrine from which the most important propositions of the system are deduced. Until this important line is drawn, the real significance of the basic philosophical question remains in the dark, since the theoretical principle of philosophical systems always figures in the foreground. That is why philosophers attach paramount importance to it, and see in it, above all, the essence of their discoveries. And this theoretical principle, of course, has far from always coincided with the answer to the basic philosophical question. The first thesis of Descartes' philosophy—'I think, therefore I am'—did not bring out, at least with sufficient definiteness, the dualist character of his system. The principle of Kant's philosophy—the demarcation of empirical and a priori knowledge, and the problem formulated in connection with it, namely how a priori synthetic judgments are possible—undoubtedly included several idealist notions, though the demarcation of types of knowledge (which, moreover, did not lack a rational kernel) did not follow directly from an idealist answer to the basic philosophical question.

The basic question thus blends with the problems posed by a philosophical system, and with the initial theoretical premisses

that distinguish one philosophy from another. A philosopher usually starts the exposition of his system of views with a statement that leads in some cases to a definite answer to the basic philosophical question, and in others already includes this answer in essence, which only comes out, however, during the logical development of the initial statement, rather than starting from the question of which is primary, the spiritual or the material. Both the idealist and the materialist may adopt the concept of being as the theoretical principle of their system; while it bears a general form there is nothing in it, except the stating of existence, that is inherent in any objects of possible knowledge. A philosopher becomes a materialist or an idealist only when he passes from this 'neutral', but essentially empty, unpremissed, theoretical principle to the differences inherent in it.[11] Aristotle's idealism, for instance, began when he stated (dividing being into matter and form) that form was a non-material principle determining matter.

Analysis of contemporary idealist philosophy, in particular, confirms the need for a principled theoretical demarcation of the initial theoretical proposition (principle) and the real answer to the basic philosophical question, even in those cases when the two coincide in form. The latest Christian spiritualism, for instance, can easily mislead the unsophisticated reader, in putting forward, as its initial thesis, that being is primary, and consciousness secondary. Only a critical analysis of the concrete content that Christian spiritualists invest the concept of being with shows that this thesis formulates an idealist answer to the basic philosophical question.

Sciacca, a spokesman of Italian Christian spiritualism, substantiates an idealist-theological system of views as follows, starting from the thesis of the primacy of being:

> Being is *primary;* only being is *the* primary. И is not even exact to say that it is 'first', in so far as being is the *beginning*; It is *presence*, it *is*, it states itself from itself; there is nothing 'before' and "after' being. We can imagine nothingness before and after, that is to say the *absence* of being, but such a supposition is only possible insofar as there is being. Nothingness does not annihilate being, for it is imaginable thanks to being... This absence, which is because of presence, we call non-being; it is a mistake to call it nothingness. All that exists is 'dialectic'; it is a presence and an absence of being, but the absence is conditioned by the presence (243:15-16).

Later he counterposes being on the one hand to the subject and on the other to the object. He takes up arms against the idealism (subjective) that reduces the object to the subject, and against materialism, which allegedly reduces the subject

to the object. Being prevails over all qualitative differences and ultimately over reality; 'the real is not being and being is not the real' (243:19). The real is declared to be a derivative form of being, which is interpreted as a supra-empirical, trans-subjective and trans-objective reality, and ultimately as God.

A line between the basic philosophical question and the theoretical principle of a philosophic system is essential not only for the critique of idealism but also for a correct understanding of materialist philosophy. Hobbes took as the initial concept (principle) of his materialist system, the concept of body, which he counterposed to the abstract, and sometimes ambiguous (as the history of scholasticism has shown), concept of being. For Hobbes philosophy was a doctrine of bodies, because nothing else existed at all.

> The subject of philosophy, or the matter it treats of, is every Body of which we can conceive any generation, and which we may by any consideration thereof compare with other Bodies; or which is capable of composition and resolution; that is to say, every Body, of whose Generation or Properties we can have any knowledge (101:7).

The initial concept of Hobbes' system, namely that of body, contains a materialist answer to the basic philosophical question, but the two must not be identified since he included a nominalist interpretation of the objects of knowledge in his answer, a denial of the objectivity of the general, identification of matter and substance, and a denial of immaterial phenomena. That understanding of the object of knowing is unacceptable to the philosophy of Marxism, despite the fact that it agrees with the materialist point of departure of Hobbes' doctrine.

Thus there are constantly different initial theoretical concepts or fundamental statements within the materialist or idealist answer to the basic philosophical question. These concepts and statements differ from one another in both form and content. Anaximander's *apeiron*, Empedocles' elements, the concept of a single nature of the eighteenth-century French materialists, and the conception of objective reality in the doctrine of dialectical materialism are initial materialist propositions that are as essentially different as the varieties of materialist philosophy connected with them. The importance of these differences comes out as soon as we analyse the premisses and conclusions associated with them more deeply.

Idealism, probably to an even greater degree than materialism, is distinguished by a diversity of modes of formulating initial philosophical concepts and fundamental statements,

which is largely due to the fact that the development of natural science constantly discredits its initial propositions, forcing its adherents to transform them within the context of an idealist interpretation of reality. Some idealists take a concept of world reason as the theoretical principle of their system, others one of a world will, and still others one of the unconscious. These are all, of course, only variants of the concept of a spiritual first principle, but they have essential significance within the limits of the idealist system of views. If the absolute principle of everything that exists is reason, the world is depicted as an ordered, rationally organised hierarchical system. If the substantial essence of the world is considered to be an irrational world will, the world is likened to chaos, in which there is no direction whatsoever, no system, or consistency, or basis for purposive human activity.

The different variants of the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question thus also, to some extent, determine the peculiarity of the content of philosophic systems. The difference between the initial concept (or statement) and the answer to the basic philosophical question must therefore also be treated positively, i.e. as a mode of developing philosophy, since the initial theoretical proposition does not play a formal role but is a profound statement that often marks a new historical stage in the development of philosophical knowledge. If that were not so, then the philosophers who attribute so much significance to the theoretical principle of a system could be reproached with superficiality. But as is readily to be seen from the example of the Cartesian *cogito*, the initial theoretical proposition is often the formulation of the most important idea of a philosophic system. The statement 'I think, therefore I am' had epoch-making socio-historical and heuristic significance. It proclaimed the right of every human being to answer the question of the truth of any statement and gave Descartes' doctrine (for all its inconsistencies and tendencies to compromise with theology) the character of a revolutionary challenge to mediaevalism. From that angle its theoretical principle was not only and not so much a mode of substantiating a certain system of views as a philosophical thesis whose profound sense was brought out by its theoretical development and methodological application.

Spinoza's system was constructed on the analogy of Euclid's *Principles* which, in the conviction not only of the seventeenth century rationalists but also of naturalists (recall that Newton expounded his *Principia mathematica philosophiae naturalis*

according to Euclid's method), was the standard of the connected, consistent, demonstrative exposition of a theory. Such a standard seemed particularly necessary in philosophy, in which unsubstantiated or insufficiently substantiated hypotheses competed with one another. The progressing divergence of doctrines, and the barren struggle (as it seemed at the time) between incompatible theories equally claiming to incontrovertible truth, and the crisis of scholasticism with all its carefully developed apparatus of discrimination and 'proofs', all inspired a conviction that only mathematics could rescue philosophy from permanent confusion.

Spinoza began with a definition of the basic concepts of his system (substance, attributes, necessity, freedom, etc.); then followed axioms, and then theorems, corollaries, and scholia. There is no need to explain that this mode of exposition (and, as Spinoza imagined, proof) seemed to the author of the *Ethica Ordine Geometrico Demonstrata* (and, of course, not just to him) to be probably his main achievement; the truths of philosophy were proved mathematically for the first time, which it was expected would wholly eliminate the grounds for disagreement. And it would be highly unhistorical to undervalue the method of exposition and proof worked out by Spinoza just because he did not allow for the specific nature of philosophical knowledge (i.e. simply borrowed the method of geometry), and because he did not pose the question of the reality of what constituted the content of his definitions when formulating those that preceded the axioms (and were therefore the real initial concepts of his system). The method of *more geometrico* employed in philosophy was a really philosophical achievement, and that is perhaps more obvious in our time than it was a hundred years ago.

Spinoza said that the beginning was always most difficult and important. He obviously had in mind his own system, too. Stressing the importance in principle of the basic philosophical question does not diminish the significance of the initial theoretical propositions of doctrines; it is simply a matter of demarcating the one from the other, and then of investigating their relationship. And the main thing in this relationship is determined by the choice of alternative, i.e. by a definite answer to the dilemma formulated by the basic philosophical question.

I must warn the reader against a formal interpretation of this choice. The opponents of materialism often argue as if it started from one postulate and idealism from another, opposite one. But the materialist answer to the basic philosophical

question is not a postulate or a hypothesis. As the GDR scientist Klaus has remarked:

> The correct answer to the basis of philosophy is a very broad abstraction from the whole development of human practice and human thought. Scientific hypotheses that propose a false answer to the basic question to us are therefore rejected because they contradict this practice of mankind (120:69).

Philosophy was already endeavouring, at the dawn of its existence, to find a firm theoretical basis that could provide a reliable point of departure for the whole further development of philosophic thought. Mankind's scientific and historical experience demonstrates that the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question *is* this sought-after foundation.

Engels characterised materialism as 'a general world outlook resting upon a definite conception of the relation between matter and mind' (52:349). What does the word 'general' mean in that context? It seemingly points to the difference between philosophy and those special forms of outlook on the world that have either only natural, or only social, reality, as their subject-matter. The natural-science, irreligious world outlook that took shape in direct connection with Copernicus' great discovery did not come to be called heliocentric by chance. Engels characterised bourgeois ideology as a juridical one. Insofar as the subject-matter of philosophy is both natural and social reality, it is the most general of all possible types of world outlook.

Engels' statement cited above, in formulating the principled basis of the materialist world outlook, thus stressed the ideological importance of the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question. The idealist critique of materialism is evidence that the latter's opponents are distinctly conscious of its ideological significance and growing influence. Contemporary idealists often criticise their predecessors for having derived being from thought and consciousness; that kind of idealist philosophising is now condemned as barren, unrealistic intellectualism, rationalism, panlogism, and so on.

The one answer to the basic philosophical question or the other thus constitutes the basis of each of the systems of philosophical views, so theoretically determining the main trend or direction of inquiry. I stress the main trend, and not more, because it would be an obvious fallacy to suggest that the answer predetermines all the propositions and conclusions of a given philosophy. Within the context of a system, like any theoretical construct in general, logical necessity is not the sole

form of determination. One must also allow for the fact that the answer to the basic question gets theoretical expression in the results of inquiry only in so far as the philosopher is consistent. But a desire to follow consistently the principle adopted is not enough to attain that end. Berkeley's principle *esse ist percipi* (to be is to be perceived) cannot be followed consistently in a system whose direct goal is to substantiate a theistic world outlook.

The pre-Marxian materialists undoubtedly endeavoured to pursue the materialist principle in philosophic analysis both of nature and of social reality. But, without being aware of it, they remained idealists in their understanding of history. And even in natural philosophy they sometimes retreated from materialism, e.g. the mechanistic assumption of a first impulse, the subjectivist interpretation of so-called secondary qualities, and so on.

The inconsistency of a materialist or an idealist not only has theoretical and epistemological roots, of course, but also socio-economic ones. The metaphysical character of the materialism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was not, of course, due to the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question, as has been claimed more than once by opponents of the materialist understanding of the world. The idealists of that time, too, were as a rule metaphysicists.

Any philosophical system takes shape in the socio-economic conditions of a definite historical epoch, and it would be unscientific to deduce its concrete propositions directly from its principle, which at best can only be a guiding thread in the course of inquiry.

This general consideration is necessary so as to avoid over-simplifying the idea of the place and role of the basic philosophical question, and at the same time to stress its principled ideological significance.

NOTES

[1] An example of how far this revision sometimes goes is the following claim of Max Scheler, the founder of philosophical anthropology: '*The physiological and psychic life processes are ontologically strongly identical* (238:74). I shall show, further on, that this proposition, and others like it, coincides fully with the idealist interpretation of objective reality and knowledge of it.

[2] It must be stressed that Lenin, when tackling the most important problems of the theory of Marxism, often employed definitions whose content was

demarcated by a single attribute; this maximum limitation convincingly disclosed the main, decisive thing in the Marxian understanding of the problem. 'Only he is a Marxist,' he wrote, for example, 'who *extends* the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of *the dictatorship of the proletariat.* This is what constitutes the most profound distinction between the Marxist and the ordinary petty (as well as big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the *real* understanding and recognition of Marxism should be tested' (145:35). It seems to me that this example makes the sense of optimal demarcation of the content of a definition particularly obvious. By employing this analogy one can readily understand that a correct approach to the basic question of philosophy consists in fixing the really principal thing that distinguishes the main parties in philosophy, and not in extending its content.

[3] I have examined this point systematically in my article 'On the Change in the Subject-Matter of Philosophy' published in M.T.Iovchuk, *et al.* (Eds.). *Problemy istorii filosofskoi i sotsiologicheskoi mysli XIX veka* (Nauka, Moscow, 1960).

[4] I am not referring here (since it is a matter only of the epistemological aspect of the question interesting me) to the fact obvious from the angle of historical materialism, that self-awareness presupposes not only perception of the external world but also man's attitude to man, the interaction between people, the result of which is society. Man, Marx said, is not born either with a mirror in his hands, or with a Fichtean self-awareness '*I* am *I*'. 'Peter only establishes his own identity as a man by first comparing himself with Paul as being of like kind' (167:I,59).

[5] One must agree with Plekhanov: 'There was a time when philosophers did not discuss such questions. This was in the initial period of the development of ancient Greek philosophy. For instance, Thales taught that water was the primary substance from which all things come and to which all things return. But he did not ask himself: what relation has consciousness to that primary substance? Nor did Anaximenes ask himself the same question when he averred that the primary substance was not water but air' (210:577).

[6] I therefore cannot agree with Anisimov's very categorical statement that primitive man 'was always above all a rationalist, and natural materialist' (5:124). It by no means follows from the obvious fact that primitive men, insofar as they adapted themselves somehow to their environment and possessed certain correct ideas about it, that these ideas were philosophical or theoretical. Some workers, in trying to disclose the historical roots of materialist and rationalist views, seemingly go too far not only into history but also into the prehistory of mankind.

[7] Conversion of analogy into a principle for explaining reality is also characteristic of the most developed varieties of idealism. Shinkaruk notes this feature in Hegel's philosophy: 'The idealistically interpreted purposive activity of man serves as an empirical model of the world. The initial premisses of this interpretation are as follows: thinking precedes material activity; the material, objective world is the product of purposeful activity and consequently of thought; the subject of purposive activity (man) is either reduced to consciousness or his consciousness is separated from this real subject and interpreted in the spirit of theology as the self-existant demiurge of the world (245:127).

[8] I have surveyed this question in greater detail in my monograph *Problemy istoriko-filosofskoi nauki* (Problems of the History of Philosophy), 2nd ed. (Mysl, Moscow, 1982). See Chap. 2, §5; Chap. 7, §3.

[9] This comes out with even greater obviousness in the doctrines of the Russian materialists, the revolutionary democrats. Pisarev, for instance, claimed that the final goal of philosophy and knowledge in general 'consisted in answering the always inevitable question of hungry and naked people; outside this question there is absolutely nothing that it is worth caring about, thinking about, and bustling about' (206:125). Quite obviously, he had in mind here not an initial theoretical fundamental proposition, not a *mode* of solving philosophical problems, but a supreme task of philosophy from the angle of the interests of the oppressed and exploited masses.

[10] I therefore cannot agree with Lyakhovetsky and Tyukhtin when they say, in their entry cited above: 'Neither Hegel nor Feuerbach, however, distinguished the question of the relation of thought to being as the basic one of all philosophical questions' (154:172). That is said too categorically. It is another matter that Hegel often smoothed over the alternative—being or thought—when proving that thought was being, and that the latter was an attribute of thought. That fault did not exist in Feuerbach, as we shall see later.

[11] That is why Engels stressed that 'as soon as we depart even a millimetre from the simple basic fact that being is common to all these things, the *differences* between these things begin to emerge—and whether these differences consist in the circumstance that some are white and others are black, that some are animate and others inanimate, that some may be of this world and others of the world beyond, cannot be decided by us from the fact that mere existence is in equal manner ascribed to them all' (50:54-55).

II

THE TWO SIDES OF THE BASIC PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTION

1. The Ontological Aspect: the Materialist Answer to the Basic Question

The question of the relation of the spiritual and the material is above all one of the essence, of the nature of what exists. When one asks 'What is the world?', 'What is it that exists?', the answers are necessarily concretised as follows: 'What is matter?', 'What is spirit?'. The relation 'spiritual-material' is an objective one, existing independently of our consciousness of it. That is the ontological aspect of the basic philosophical question. When the psychic reaches the level of consciousness in its development, and knowledge of the reality around it begins, an epistemological, subject-object relation arises.

The notion that something is primary and something else secondary is based on the assumption that both exist. The secondary posits the primary, which, however, is primary in the context of the 'spiritual-material' relation. But this relation does not have a correlative character, since only one aspect of it depends on the other, which, on the contrary, is independent, primordial, substantial. The Greek materialists started from the concept of a primary matter (*materia prima*), a primary substance, treating everything different from it as transformed forms of it. Despite the naivete of that posing of the question, which did not rule out the primary in time (and so the beginning of the world), its principled ideological significance is obvious; it is a matter of the material unity of the world. Is that not why the idea of primary matter retains a significance of principle also for contemporary physics? This idea contradicts the metaphysical notion that everything cognised will always be an infinitely small part of the unknown. Markov has remarked, apropos of that:

> The drive to understand 'something' as constituted of 'something' 'simpler' and fundamental has always been progressive and led, as history witnesses, to quite substantial positive results. The idea of primary matter

> as the basis and driving motive of a definite approach to analysis of the material world has always been and remains productive (165:66-67).

The 'spiritual-material' relation is not a substantial or absolute ontological one in the sense in which the motion, change, and development of matter are absolute. It arises of objective necessity, but only in certain conditions. It also disappears, consequently, of objective necessity, because of a corresponding change in the conditions. One must not, therefore, as Svidersky remarks,

> confuse the basic question of philosophy with the basic relationship of reality itself. The relationship of matter and consciousness is not always universal and in that sense the basic relation of reality itself (252:45).

There is evidently an endless number of heavenly bodies lacking the most elementary phenomena of life.

Idealism has often, since Schopenhauer's time, depicted human reason as an anomaly, doomed to disappear without trace. That view suits not only irrationalists but also theologians, who suggest that the advent of rational beings was an indubitable miracle.

From the angle of materialism reason is not something foreign to matter. The spiritual is a natural consequence of matter's continually occurring transformations. The first materialists, the hylozoists, who identified life with the motion of matter, made a profound, though naive guess about the essence of the living. The hypothesis that there was a time when there was no life in the infinite Universe cannot be scientifically substantiated, just like the assumption that life exists only on our planet. Engels seemingly had that in mind when he said:

> We have the certainty that ... none of (matter's) attributes can ever be lost, and therefore, also, that with the same iron necessity that it will exterminate on the earth its highest creation, the thinking mind, it must somewhere else and at another time again produce it (51:39).

Pre-Marxian materialists sometimes expressed an idea of the co-eternity of spiritual and material, while at the same time stressing the former's dependence on the latter. Spinoza called thought an attribute of substance-nature. Diderot considered sensitivity, the elementary form of the psychic, to be inherent in molecules. In the language of contemporary logic this 'rooting' of the spiritual in the material can be expressed as follows, in Narsky's view: 'In the dispositional sense consciousness is *always* inherent in matter as an inalienable property of it' (190:68). That posing of the question rules out the assumption of a chance origin of consciousness. But a clarification is seemingly

necessary here. It should not be supposed that everything that is not chance is necessary or inevitable. Definite possibilities (including that of the origin of life in certain conditions), for instance, are not something haphazard or chance. But the concept of necessity is inapplicable to possibilities of that kind precisely because any possibility is necessarily contradicted by its negation. Any possibility posits the existence of another one as a condition of its existence as a possibility. In that connection Shklovsky remarked with reason:

> One cannot, of course, exclude the possibility in principle that in the contemporary age Earth is the sole focus of intelligent life in the Galaxy and, who knows, perhaps also in considerably greater spacetime regions of the Universe. It is worth philosophers' while to ponder seriously about that possibility. Problems of a quite non-trivial character arise here, it would seem, especially when one allows for the circumstance that the length of the 'psychozoic' era on Earth may be limited (246:62).

The question of the primary thus has nothing in common, in its materialist (and even more dialectical-materialist) posing, with the mythological notion of a primaeval chaos that is often ascribed to materialism by its critics. The counterposing of the material to the spiritual means only that the existence of matter does not presuppose a necessity for consciousness to exist. The spiritual on the contrary, however, does not exist without matter. The counterposing of spiritual and material consequently

> has absolute significance only within the bounds of a very limited field—in this case exclusively within the bounds of the fundamental epistemological problem of what is to be regarded as primary and what as secondary. Beyond these bounds the relative character of this antithesis is indubitable (142:131).

This proposition of Lenin's indicates that an absolute counterposing of spiritual and material is incompatible with materialism; it constitutes the essence of philosophical dualism, which substantialises the antithesis of spiritual and material. Idealism, too, often starts from a thesis of the absolute antithesis of the psychic and the physical, assuming at the same time that this relation of absolute incompatibility is removed by the supernatural spirit.

From the standpoint of dialectical materialism the spiritual is an immaterial property of the material, its immateriality, moreover, not consisting in anything transphysical; the nature of this immateriality is expressed by the epistemological concept of reflection.

The difference of principle of the philosophy of Marxism from the preceding materialism finds direct expression not only

in a materialist answer, but also in a dialectical one, to the basic philosophical question. This answer comes, in the first place, from a scientifically realised, epistemologically investigated, distinctly formulated basic philosophical question, while pre-Marxian materialists had no clear idea of its structure, place, and significance. Secondly, dialectical materialism excludes in principle any identifying or confusing of the spiritual and material. Lenin noted Dietzgen's mistake in calling everything that exists matter. That seemingly consistent materialist view proved in fact to be a concession to idealism. And Lenin warned: 'to say that thought is material is to make a false step, a step towards confusing materialism and idealism' (142:225). For it is objective idealism that interprets the spiritual as a reality existing outside and independent of human consciousness.

The dialectical-materialist understanding of the immateriality of consciousness is organically connected with the epistemological definition of matter developed by Lenin, according to which the concept of matter 'epistemologically implies *nothing but* objective reality existing independently of the human mind and reflected by it' (142:242). The epistemological understanding of the spiritual as immaterial corresponds to this philosophical definition of the concept of the material.

A third feature of the dialectical-materialist answer to the basic philosophical question consists in *historism*. The pre-Marxian materialists often said that the spiritual, like matter, did not originate. That point of view limited the materialist understanding of the 'spiritual-material' relation to recognition solely of a dependence of the former on the latter. The theory of evolution, confirmed in biology in the second half of the nineteenth century, rejected this limited view. Natural science brought out the error of another metaphysical materialist notion as well, namely that certain combinations of elementary particles caused the appearance of consciousness. The unsoundness of that notion was revealed by dialectical materialism, which counterposed a concept of development to it that is characterised by continuity, succession, direction, irreversibility, preservation of achieved results, etc. Unfortunately this difference has not yet been adequately studied philosophically, which provides grounds for certain critics of materialism to deny the materialist understanding of the origin of consciousness, since (as they claim) no combination of elementary particles can lead to the formation of a thinking brain.

One of the most important characteristics of the dialectical-materialist answer to the basic philosophical question is its socio-

logical aspect. The pre-Marxian materialists defined matter as substance or body, and this characteristic of objective reality, drawn from mechanistic natural science, provided no notion of the peculiarities of material social relations and of the spiritual processes caused by them. It became possible to overcome that historical limitation of pre-Marxian materialism through the discovery and investigation of the specific material basis of social life.

The history of philosophy thus brings out various types of materialist answer to the basic philosophical question, corresponding to the main stages in the development and to the most important forms of materialist philosophy. The dialectical-materialist answer sums up the centuries-long history of this question, which deserves special investigation. Such an inquiry, of course, is beyond the scope of my book, yet a brief excursus into history is necessary for a proper understanding of the content and significance of the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question.

The materialist natural philosophy of the ancients—the first historical form of philosophical thought—did not yet single out the concept of the psychic as something different from the material, although the term 'spirit' was employed, with which, it seems, concepts were associated that were derived both from everyday experience and from mythology. Thales supposed that a magnet had a soul, i.e. tried to explain the phenomenon of magnetism in that way; the concept of soul served him to explain a far from spiritual phenomenon.

The fact that Thales, incidentally, drew on the notion of a spirit to explain such a mysterious phenomenon for his time as magnetism indicates that special properties were still ascribed to the soul. According to Herakleitos it was not simply a flame, but the most perfect state of fire, free of moisture. Democritos considered it composed of very smooth, round atoms. The spiritual was then still not counterposed to matter as something qualitatively different, though derived from it. This undeveloped character of the notion of the spiritual was a main reason why the materialist philosophy of antiquity, as Engels stressed, 'was incapable of clearing up the relation between mind and matter' (50:159). This philosophy treated qualitative differences as significant only from the standpoint of everyday consciousness ('opinion'). Philosophical consciousness, having fixed the identity of the aggregate states of water, judged all other observed states by analogy with it. The original natural materialism, Engels pointed out,

> regards the unity of the infinite diversity of natural phenomena as a matter of course, and seeks it in something definitely corporeal, a particular thing, as Thales does in water (51:186).

It was that conception of the material unity of nature that constituted the central point of Greek natural philosophy, since it had not yet singled out the psychophysical problem, let alone the basic philosophical question.

The idea of the substantial identity of the psychic and the physical was not specially substantiated or proved, partly because there was as yet no notion of the significance of the difference between them, and partly as a consequence of the predominance of naturally formed hylozoist views. The theoretical roots of that conception of the unity of the world lay in the mode of regarding the world inherent in the first materialist doctrines. As Engels stressed,

> Among the Greeks—just because they were not yet advanced enough to dissect, analyse nature—nature is still viewed as a whole, in general. The universal connection of natural phenomena is not proved in regard to particulars; to the Greeks it is the result of direct contemplation. Herein lies the inadequacy of Greek philosophy, on account of which it had to yield later to other modes of outlook on the world. But herein also lies its superiority over all its subsequent metaphysical opponents (51:45,46).

The metaphysically thinking philosophers of modern times, by rejecting the naive dialectical views of the world, blocked their own progress 'from an understanding of the part to an understanding of the whole, to an insight into the general interconnection of things' (51:45).

Engels thus considered that philosophy (and incidentally knowledge in general) ascended in its development from *understanding of the particular to understanding of the whole.* The problem of the world as a whole is among the root problems of philosophy. Demarcation of philosophy from the special sciences does not in the least eliminate this problem from philosophy. The fact that certain scientific disciplines are concerned with this problem does not in the least diminish its significance for philosophy, but on the contrary increases it.

The world as a whole (it is, of course, not simply the aggregate of everything that exists) is boundless and inexhaustible. It is a matter, above all, of the universal and, in a certain sense, absolute interconnection and interdependence of phenomena, of the unity of the world. It seemed something quite obvious to the Greek materialists, constantly confirmed by everyday experience. But when there became an awareness in philosophy of the real antithesis between the spiritual and material, this

unity became problematic. Subsequently it was more and more often called in question, with the consequence that the qualitatively heterogeneous phenomena of nature were systematically and specially investigated by isolating them from one another. The primitive naive notion of the universal interdependence and interconversion of natural phenomena, which was based on a proposition of their substantial identity, gave way to a metaphysical view that interpreted the qualitative differences between things as evidence of their essential independence of one another. Yet the idea of the unity of the world did not get consigned to oblivion. It was constantly revived by natural science and philosophy in the course of their development. Both materialism and idealism, and both metaphysically thinking philosophers and dialecticians, defended and substantiated the idea of the unity of the world, each, of course, in his own key.

The moulding of the materialism of modern times was closely linked with the revival of Greek cosmological doctrines that preceded this historical process in the natural-philosophy systems of the Renaissance. The natural philosophers of the beginning of the seventeenth century developed the view of the atomistic materialism of antiquity about the infinite *universum*, which received a natural-science substantiation for the first time through Copernicus' system and the corrections introduced into it by Giordano Bruno.

The idea of the space-time infinity of the universe smashed the scholastic notion of the radical antithesis of heavenly 'matter' to base earthly substance. The dualism of matter and form was also shattered along with that of the earthly and the heavenly, i.e. the Aristotelian-scholastic hyiomorphism that interpreted matter only as material for the creative activity of a supernatural spirit. The infinity of the *universum* was comprehended as an unlimited diversity of the potentials contained in matter, and as evidence that matter was not confined to any limits; it was universal reality, a unique and single world.

The hylozoism of the ancients was reborn in the organicist conceptions of natural philosophers who ascribed vegetable and animal functions to metals and minerals. Those views undermined the theological, scholastic dogmas about the supernatural character of the spiritual, and denied the theological division of the world into this one and the other.[1] The pantheistic identification, typical of mediaeval ideology, also provided substantiation of the principle of material unity, since it led to denial of God.

The materialists of modern times, unlike their predecessors,

had already singled out the question of the relation of spiritual and material, attaching ever greater importance to it. The anti-feudal struggle against religious-scholastic mystification of the spiritual as something transcendental and out of this world which was the primary essence and other-world principle of human life in this world, brought this question to the foreground. Materialism demystified the spiritual, seeing in it a natural phenomenon governed by the laws of nature. Toland, who ascribed life to everything that existed, linked its highest manifestations with a special, material basis, the brain. In that connection he criticised Spinoza's conception of thought as an attribute of matter, but of matter in general. 'Whatever be the Principle of Thinking in Animals,' he wrote, 'yet it cannot be performed but by the means of the Brain' (256:139). Citing Hippokrates and Demokritos, Toland claimed that all emotional and psychic disorders had their cause in a disturbance of the normal state of the brain. That was the point of view, too, of Lamettrie, Holbach, Diderot, and others. If the existence of reason presupposed the existence of a specific, material substratum, Holbach argued,

> likewise to say that nature is governed by an intelligence, is to claim that it is governed by a being provided with organs, seeing that it could not, without organs, have either perceptions, ideas, intentions, thoughts, desires, plan, or actions (103:72).

Thus, in modern times, too, just as in antiquity, denial of the supernatural and recognition of the material unity of the world were inseparable. But whereas the natural philosophers of antiquity and the Renaissance substantiated the principle of the material unity of the world by reducing the supernatural to the natural, sensually perceived, the materialists of modern times enriched this principle of the explanation of the world, while developing it from itself, by a developed materialist answer to the basic philosophical question. This was a new stage in the development of materialist philosophy; substantiation of the material unity of the world coincided with materialist monism.

Both monism and recognition of the unity of the world, as Plekhanov stressed, were of course compatible with idealism. But only materialist monism ruled out the spiritualist, absolute counterposing of the psychic to the physical, of the mentally comprehended to sensually perceived reality. Only materialist monism, consequently, consistently followed the principle of the unity of the world. According to this tenet nature in 'its broadest sense' as Holbach said, was the sole reality, or 'the great whole that results from the assemblage of different substances, from their different combinations, and from the different mo-

tions that we see in the universe' (103:11). In opposition to materialism the idealist conception of the unity of the world inevitably includes a latent dualism of spiritual and material. I must stress, incidentally, that recognition of the unity of the world and the concept 'the world as a whole' do not fully cover one another. Idealist philosophers, who counterpose a dualist or pluralist interpretation to the principle of the unity of the world, in no way eliminate the concept of the world as a whole even when they deny it. They only interpret the whole world dualistically or pluralistically. Even irrationalists, for whom the world and the universe are something like chaos, ruling out order of any kind, interpret the world as a whole in their own way. But only materialism indissolubly links the concepts of the world as a whole and of the unity of the world as the essential content of its materiality.

Any attempts to picture matters as if the questions of the world as a whole and of the unity of the world were essentially different ones are therefore in principle unsound. For the materialist the concept of the unity of the world is a concretisation of the more general one of 'the world as a whole', since to recognise the unity of the world and at the same time to deny the legitimacy of the philosophical concept of the world as a whole (as some Marxists unfortunately do) means to admit quite incompatible statements.

The principle of the material unity of the world does not simply precede the comprehensive materialist posing of the basic philosophical question historically. In that case it could seem to be the natural-philosophy past of modern materialism. But this principle is one of the most important aspects of the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question, from which it follows that the concept of the world as a whole, too, continues to be developed and enriched by new content disclosing the *unity of an endless* diversity of phenomena.

Pre-Marxian materialists spoke of the *great whole* of nature. In our day the expression often provokes an indulgent smile, since the world as a whole cannot directly be the object of knowing. Neopositivists especially make fun of this kind of 'archaic', 'natural philosophy' turn of phrase. 'To be real in the scientific sense', Carnap, for example, declares, 'means to be an element of the system; hence this concept cannot be meaningfully applied to the system itself (30:207). In other words, one system or another can only be the object of inquiry when it itself is a subsystem, i.e. an element of another system. The world as a whole cannot be singled out as a subsystem, and so is unreal in the sci-

entific sense. Carnap's idea seems at first glance to be indisputable; one cannot shift the Earth if there is no fulcrum outside it. But if the unity of the world, to use Engels' words, cannot be shown by a pair of juggler's phrases, then denial of this unity cannot be substantiated by the same means. It is worth looking into this matter in more detail, if only because Carnap's point of view justifies epistemological subjectivism and agnosticism.

The subjectivist denies the reality of the world as a whole, since this whole is not a directly given, sensually perceived object of existing or possible experience. He represents the term 'whole' in application to the whole aggregate of phenomena as devoid of any sense. The agnostic argues differently. By claiming that sciences (and philosophy) do not recognise the world as a whole either directly or indirectly, or in any degree whatever (corresponding to their level of development), the agnostic thus somehow recognises the Kantian unknowable 'thing in itself, i.e. a reality beyond the limit of quite knowable phenomena. The metaphysical gulf between phenomena and 'things in themselves' is revived as an absolute incompatibility of knowledge of the world of phenomena and of the world as a whole. Carnap, too, is consistent in his own way when he declares that objective reality (or the world of things) is not an object of scientific knowledge:

> those who raise the question of the reality of the thing world itself have perhaps in mind not a theoretical question as their formulation seems to suggest, but rather a practical question, a matter of a practical decision concerning the structure of our language (30:207).

It turns out that we only have the right to speak of the reality of those things or events that we include in a certain system by means of our language. But to recognise the existence of the world as a whole, and likewise the unity of the world, means to employ ordinary 'thing language' (which has an unscientific character) unconsciously.

Such is the position of the neopositivist; it differs from that of objective idealism in denying the real existence of the world as a whole. That is a pseudoconcept, Carnap explains, and from his position objective reality is just such a pseudoconcept. Both recognition and denial of objective reality should therefore be rejected as pseudopropositions, which means that one should adhere to philosophical scepticism on the question of objective reality, i.e. reserve judgment on it.

It is not enough, in order to refute a false point of view, of course, just to point out the untenable conclusions that follow from it. The erroneous proposition must be refuted in essence.

It is necessary, consequently, to return to the thesis that the world as a whole cannot be the object of knowing. This is correct in the sense that investigation posits singling out of the object of inquiry, but a procedure of that kind is impracticable as regards the world as whole. There is no tower from which one could observe the whole world; that must not only be understood literally but also taken in the figurative sense.[2] But it does not follow from this, as the contemporary West German idealist philosopher Leisegang claims, that

> the world as a whole, the universe, and nature are something outside experience. We see and experience always only this or that in the world, this or that which nature has produced, but never the world, or nature, as such and as a whole (137:72).

It is very notable that Leisegang equates the world as a whole, the universe, and nature with one another. In fact, for one who denies the possibility of cognising the world as a whole, all objective reality proves to be unknowable.

In stressing the unlimited qualitative diversity of the universe, we do not simply establish a methodological postulate that possibly comes into contradiction with the principle of the unity of the world, but we formulate a conclusion that sums up the whole history of knowledge. And that conclusion, like many other propositions of natural science (about which I shall speak below), refers to *the world as a whole*. When we say that there are no objective limits to knowing the world, we are once again arguing about the world as a whole. But how are judgments of that kind possible? They are possible primarily because there are no absolute antitheses in the ontological sense. Whatever 'marvellous' phenomena cosmology has discovered, we are quite justified in claiming that they will not be wholly incompatible with those already known to science. There are no grounds for assuming that cosmology or any other science will discover somewhere that which the theologists and scholastics of the Middle Ages tried to discover at distances incomparably closer to our planet. Natural science confirms the scientific, atheistic conviction that there is nothing absolutely opposite to what exists and what is already known. Difference posits identity and is inseparable from it. Diversity and unity do not exclude one another. Heterogeneity, like homogeneity, is not absolute. An 'antiworld' in the precise full sense of the term is impossible; it fixes antitheses, whose relativity is attested by their constantly being revealed unity. In the 'antiworld' the material does not become a product of the spiritual; any feature of the 'antiworld' exists in a certain natural relation with its antipode. These general propositions

acquire a non-trivial character as soon as they are applied in a concrete inquiry and in evaluating its results. As Gott justly remarks:

> The concept of impossibility not only reflects that certain possibilities do not exist, but also reflects what processes do not permit the existence of these possibilities, i.e. have a positive as well as a negative aspect (78:220).

The concept of the ontological is applied to the problem of the world as a whole, of course, in a dialectical-materialist sense, which presupposes an epistemological interpretation of any form of universality inherent in nature, society, and knowledge. Any description of objective reality and its scientific reflection is based on a definite level of development of knowledge. This description consequently changes, and is enriched by new content as knowledge develops. In that sense ontological definitions are also epistemological ones. And this unity of the epistemological and ontological in scientific and philosophical knowledge is of decisive importance in the dialectical-materialist posing of the problem of the world as a whole.

The history of science enables one to say that the existence of absolute antitheses is epistemologically excluded, at least within the context of scientific knowledge; new scientific truths do not refute 'old' ones. They make them more precise, concretise and supplement them, taking them into a system of more profound scientific notions. As Kuznetsov correctly notes:

> Theories whose correctness has been established experimentally for any field of physical phenomena are not eliminated as something false when new, more general theories appear, but retain their significance for the former domain of phenomena, as a limiting form and partial case of the new theories (130:156).

It follows from this that a scientific, theoretical reflection of the diversity and unity of the world is inseparable from the processes of inquiry.

Being, beyond the limits of our knowledge, is an open question, precisely an open and not a closed one.[3] That also applies to what is called 'the world as a whole', since it recognises that such a whole exists (no matter how abstract this truth is relative to the world as a whole, it is by no means a tautology). The history of science has shown that the investigation of unobservable phenomena is a regular process of development of scientific knowledge. Many phenomena have become observable because they were first discovered theoretically.

Observability was an absolute premiss of knowability only for the empiricists of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. Today

empiricism takes up a more flexible epistemological position, since science successfully anticipates unobservable phenomena, establishes their existence, and in the final analysis makes them observable indirectly, if not directly. True, the unobservable object called 'the world as a whole' cannot be recorded even negatively like, for example, a filtrable virus. While space probes have photographed the far side of the moon, unobservable from the earth (recognition of the existence of which was deemed scientifically senseless by neopositivists because of the unverifiability of the relevant statements), one will never fly around the world as a whole, of course, in a space probe. But one must not understand singling out of the object of inquiry in an oversimplified way. Science singles out not only the individual and the particular, but also the general, and even the universal, i.e. a definiteness of phenomena that it relates to all phenomena *without exception*, or in other words to the world as a whole. The universalisation of scientific propositions of that kind is far from always justified, of course, but even then science gets the chance to establish its frontiers, i.e. to concretise universality. The discovery of laws of nature is the singling out of the most general, necessary, and recurring relations that apply at least *partially* to the world as a whole, even if only because the part of a whole is not something foreign to it but includes the nature of the whole to some extent or other (and this has, of course, to be investigated).

Necessity and universality are inseparable. But not every statement about universality applies to the world as a whole. And it is impossible to establish a priori that it does not apply to everything that exists; that, too, has to be proved. Limitation of the universality of laws and scientific propositions is just as difficult a research task in general as substantiation of their universality.

The law of *universal* gravitation was discovered by Newton precisely as a law of the *universum.* And that constitutes the nub of the discovery, because terrestrial attraction was known before Newton; it had been recorded in the law of falling bodies discovered by Galileo. Newton's genius in this case was that he extended the idea of attraction to the whole universe, which was incompatible with common sense since it called for the assumption of *actio in distans* and was fraught with paradoxes that Newton tried to avoid by means of theological assumptions. Yet the law he discovered was confirmed by subsequent research and experiments, and is still being confirmed today. That does not mean that its universality will never be limited. More essenti-

ally, limitation of the universality of this law will be a further deepening of understanding of the world as a whole, since it cannot be a matter of its repudiation as non-existent, in fact inoperative, etc. But is the law of universal gravitation really an exception? Aren't the conservation laws also really laws of the *universum*?.

Neopositivists, it turns out, clearly underestimate the possibilities of science. Despite Carnap's protestations, natural science does not renounce study of the world as a whole at all. This seems a banal truth when it is grasped. But still, let me cite the naturalists themselves. Here, for example, is what Landau and Lifschitz wrote:

> the *world as a whole* in the general theory of relativity (my italics—*T.O.*) must not be regarded as a closed system, but as one that is in a variable gravitational field; in that connection application of the law of increasing entropy does not lead to a conclusion about the necessity of a statistical equilibrium (132:46).

But what applies to the general theory of relativity is seemingly also applicable to other fundamental scientific theories.

Zelmanov notes that the concept of the world as a whole and of the universe as a whole is treated in cosmology in at least three aspects. (1) The universe is regarded as a single object irrespective of its parts. (2) The universe as a whole is regarded in its relations to its parts, and the latter in relation to the world as a whole. (3) The concept of the universe as a whole is applied to all its regions irrespective of their relation to each other and to the whole universe. He concludes accordingly: 'cosmology is a physical doctrine of the Universe as a whole, including the theory of the whole world covered by astronomical observations as a part of the Universe' (268:277). As for the views of those cosmologists who do not think it possible to speak of the knowability in principle of the world as a whole, Zelmanov justly remarks (in my view) in another of his works:

> Paradoxically, denial of the legitimacy of the doctrine of the Universe as a whole, based on any considerations of the Universe whatsoever, is logically contradictory, since these considerations themselves can be treated as elements of such a doctrine, while denial of its legitimacy also means denial of the legitimacy of the considerations adduced (267:321).

So the world as a whole is not a speculative abstraction of natural philosophers but a special, I would say *mediated*, object of scientific inquiry. The world as a whole is not something transcendent, beyond all limitations in regard to any attained knowledge. Denial of its knowability in principle (and always historically limited)—at first glance a profound point of view—

proves on closer examination to be a superficial, empiricist one, for empiricists have always asserted that we know the finite, and that the infinite is unfathomable.

The real problem is something else; how to study the world as a whole? How is this cognitive process performed? How far can scientific propositions regarded as referring to the whole *universum* be rigorously substantiated? Are they not destined to remain hypotheses for ever? Dialectical-materialist analysis of the process of cognition gives an answer to that in general form; in knowing the finite, individual, passing, and partial, we at the same time (within certain limits, of course) know the infinite, general, intransient, and whole. As Engels put it:

> In fact all real, exhaustive knowledge consists solely in raising the individual thing in thought from individuality into particularity and from this into universality, in seeking and establishing the infinite in the finite, the eternal in the transitory. The form of universality, however, is the form of self-completeness, hence of infinity; it is the comprehension of the many finites in the infinite.... All true knowledge of nature is knowledge of the eternal, the infinite, and hence essentially absolute (51:234).

Comprehension of the world as a whole is thus the mediated result of scientific cognition in respect of a certain 'section' of the *universum*, and not simply of the whole conceivable aggregate of existing and possible phenomena. If everything consists of atoms, for example, and of the elementary particles that form them, then atomic physics studies the world as a whole, though it does not study psychic processes, social life, etc. If, say, the proposition of quantum mechanics that the dualism of wave-particles is absolutely general, applying to the whole physical world, is correct, then here, too, it is a matter of study of the world as a whole. Recognition of that has nothing in common with justification of the unscientific, metaphysical assumption of the possibility of absolute knowledge, which is incompatible with materialist dialectics.

In saying that physics and certain other fundamental sciences study the world as a whole, we also start from the assumption that the unity of the world (the world as whole) is revealed in its parts, and so in special fields of scientific inquiry. The whole of the universum, then, must not be understood as an external aggregate of parts, but rather as something inner, i.e. as the nature of the whole, which incidentally is expressed by dialectical laws and categorial relations. It is also important to stress that recognition of the reality of definite (of course, limited) knowledge of the world as a whole not only has ideological and meth-

odological significance, but also constitutes a necessary element of concrete, historical research at a quite high level of theoretical generalisation. As Sergei Vavilov wrote:

> It seems to me that there is an undoubted grain of truth in the tendencies of the theory of relativity to explain the properties of elementary particles from the properties of the world as a whole. If the properties of particles really explain very much in the behaviour of the world as a whole, then, on the other hand, we can rightly expect, according to the general laws of dialectics, that the properties of elementary particles themselves are determined by those of the world as a whole (258:71).[4]

Lenin constantly stressed, when characterising materialist philosophy, that it posits a definite understanding of the world as a whole. 'There is nothing in the world but matter in motion, and matter in motion cannot move otherwise than in space and time' (142:158). Marxian authors who insist that the concept of the world as a whole is illegitimate should ponder whether their position is compatible with the basic propositions of materialism, for it is quite obvious that denial of this concept cannot be agreed with such a truth, formulated by Lenin, as 'the world is matter in motion' (142:262). Natural scientists also undoubtedly agree with that statement about the world as a whole and in that sense it is not only a philosophical concept, but also a scientific one.

Lenin remarked that the sciences elucidate the unity of the world in a specific way, by virtue of which a special epistemological investigation of these forms of scientific knowledge is needed. 'The unity of nature is revealed in the "astonishing analogy" between the differential equations of the various realms of phenomena' (142:269). Contemporary natural science has given new, at times quite unexpected confirmations of Lenin's idea. I have in mind the broad spread of mathematical methods of inquiry in sciences that developed for ages independent of mathematics, the peculiar 'welding together' of several fundamental sciences such as physics and chemistry, the rise of a multitude of 'butt' disciplines, which witnesses to the unity of qualitatively different processes of nature, the progress of cybernetics and electronics in modelling several higher psychic functions. Epistemological comprehension of the historical process of the differentiation and integration of sciences also confirms the dialectical-materialist conception of the world as a whole. The unity of the world is recorded in the classification of the sciences, which brings out the link between them as having an objective ontological basis. As Fedoseev has written:

> The interconnection of the sciences reflects the interconnection of phenomena in reality itself. The problem of the interconnection of the sciences is one of the unity of the world and a qualitative feature of its different fields (54:138).

The expression 'to cognise the world as a whole' is often understood quite wrongly, as if it were a matter of posing the task of cognising all and everything, summing up all knowledge, and so on, ignoring the historically formed division of labour in the scientific field. Authors who argue in that manner usually affirm that only all the sciences taken together study the world as a whole, while each separate science deals with some part or facet of the world. Views of that kind do not, in my view, touch the nub of the question posed here. Study of the world as a whole has nothing in common, of course, with claims to comprehend all and everything (everything that existed in the past, exists now, and what will be) or to substitute some sort of special science for the whole aggregate of existing scientific disciplines. From my point of view, the whole aggregate of presently existing sciences does not dispose of knowledge of the whole, since new branches of science will arise, and now unknown fields of research will be discovered that will essentially alter our notions of the *universum*.

Engels remarked that Greek philosophy had already anticipated the correct notion that

> the whole of nature, from the smallest element to the greatest, from grains of sand to suns, from *Protista* to man, has its existence in eternal coming into being and passing away, in ceaseless flux, in unresting motion and change (51:30-31).

That understanding of the world as a whole, at which the Greek philosophers had only brilliantly guessed, has become one of the most vital theoretical propositions not only of the dialectical-materialist outlook on the world but also of concrete, scientific research.

The unity of the world—it is constantly necessary to stress—is not demonstrated by speculative, logical arguments, but by the whole edifying history of science and material production. The scientific philosophical summing-up and comprehension of this world-historical process not only rejects the idealist notions of the immaterial essence of the material or the supernatural essence of the spiritual, but also helps bring out and describe the diverse forms of the material unity of the world. Philosophy, it goes without saying, studies the world as a whole and the unity of the world only in a certain aspect, since it wholly excludes the specific problematic of the special sciences. It does not require

great acumen to understand that investigation of the most general patterns of the motion, change, and development of nature, society, and knowledge is a limitation of the investigative task that corresponds to the subject-matter and competence of the philosophy of Marxism.

The explanations adduced seemingly make it comprehensible in what sense one not only can but must recognise both the possibility and necessity of studying the world as a whole. As Melyukhin justly remarks, the problem should be formulated as follows:

> Can a scientific philosophy answer the questions whether 'the world as a whole' was created by a God or whether it has existed eternally, infinite in space and time, whether the whole world is material, whether matter has certain universal properties and laws of being, type of motion, interaction, space, and time, conservation laws, law of causality, and so on? The answer can and must be quite unambiguous, because any deviation from it and any vacuum in the comprehended philosophical information provide an excuse to spokesmen of religious-idealist doctrines to fill that vacuum in accordance with the spirit of these doctrines. The fact that no science can provide complete understanding of the world as a whole by no means signifies that there cannot be reliable information in our notions about the properties of the whole material world, and that a meaningful outlook on the world is impossible (183:144).

That is why one cannot agree with those Marxist researchers who suggest that the task of studying the world as a whole has sunk into oblivion along with natural philosophy.'[5]

It is hardly necessary to explain in detail that the unsoundness of natural philosophy was not at all that it studied the world as a whole; it drew mainly on surmises for lack of concrete scientific data. Natural philosophy, Engels pointed out, outlived its time because it was now possible to 'present in an approximately systematic form a comprehensive view of the interconnection in nature by means of the facts provided by empirical natural science itself (52:364). He consequently considered it possible, by rejecting the natural-philosophical systems, *to give a general picture of nature as a connected whole* on the basis of properly tested scientific facts. His *Dialectics of Nature* was an attempt of that kind to comprehend the material unity of the world philosophically. This new posing of the problem differed radically from the natural-philosophical one; the principle of natural philosophy was a complete 'system of nature', a system of final truths in the last instance. Opposing the principle without which natural philosophy was inconceivable, Engels wrote:

> The world clearly constitutes a single system, i.e., a coherent whole, but the knowledge of this system presupposes a knowledge of *all* nature and history, which man will *never* attain. Hence he who makes systems

> must nil in the countless gaps with *figments of his own imagination* (50:386).

Warning against the systematics of natural philosophy, which squeezes the infinite whole into the Procrustean bed of always historically limited knowledge, Engels (we see) did not consider knowledge of the world as a whole an idle business. He simply pointed out the dialectical contradictoriness of this cognitive process:

> cognition of the infinite is therefore beset with double difficulty and from its very nature can only take place in an infinite asymptotic progress. And that fully suffices us in order to be able to say: the infinite is just as much knowable as unknowable, and that is all that we need (51:234-235).

Engels thus fought against two metaphysical extremes; on the one hand, against denial of the knowability in principle of the world as a whole and, on the other, against the dogmatic understanding that made an absolute of the knowledge of the world as a whole that science already to some extent disposed of.

The philosophy of Marxism bases itself in its statements about the *universum* on the results obtained by *all the sciences* of nature and society. But that is why its conclusions naturally do not coincide with those arrived at by each of these sciences. Both philosophical statements about the world as a whole and about particular sciences are absolutely ineradicable, necessary, and heuristically fruitful when they have (1) a materialist, and (2) a dialectical character. Let philosophers who think themselves spokesmen of a scientific outlook on the world, try to manage without 'metaphysical', 'ontological', and 'natural-philosophical' statements of such a kind. Materialism, of course, is a system of logically interconnected theoretical propositions. I shall list a few, apologising in advance to the reader to whom I am communicating nothing new in this case. The unity of the world consists in its materiality. Matter is uncreatable and indestructible. Consciousness is a product of the development of matter. Motion is the form of existence of matter. Matter exists in space and time. The world is knowable in principle. Do all these statements relate to the world as a whole or only to that part of it that has already been mastered by science and practice? Positivists and other spokesmen of the contemporary subjective-agnostic philosophy of science reject these propositions, declaring them to lack scientific sense, and come quite logically to an absolute relativism.

Some of them, incidentally, have already begun to revise their former denial of the comprehensibility of the concept of the

world as a whole. Popper, for instance, wrote in the foreword to his *Logic of Scientific Inquiry* (1959):

> I, however, believe that there is at least one philosophical problem in which all thinking men are interested. It is *the problem of cosmology: the problem of understanding the world—including ourselves, and our knowledge, as part of the world* (211:15).

His paper at the 14th International Congress of Philosophy was evidence that he was trying to treat the problem of the world as a whole from a stance of neorealist pluralism, some propositions of which are similar to the idealist postulates of Platonism (see: 213:24-25).

Dialectical materialism rejects positivist scepticism as a subjective, anti-dialectical view, by investigating the real facts of scientific knowledge. Marxist materialism not only affirms the truths of pre-Marxian materialism but also goes incomparably further in philosophical generalisation. Development is universal and absolute. Contradictions, and the interconversion and struggle of opposites, constitute the inner content of the process of development. Development takes place through the conversion of quantitative changes into qualitative ones, through negation and negation of the negation. No special insight is needed in order to understand that these statements refer to the world as a whole, otherwise they simply lack scientific sense. When developing, elucidating, and enriching them we once again have the world as a whole in mind and not some part of it. That is why denial of the world as a whole (in whatever sense, epistemological or ontological) is a denial of the unity of the world, and of the universality of motion, space, time, etc. Natural science does not provide any grounds for conclusions of that kind; on the contrary it confirms the materialist proposition of the unity of the world on this point, as on other matters. Furthermore, as I showed above, natural science has passed of necessity, at the present time, to the notion of a diversity of links and interdependences between the world as a whole and its component parts, right down to elementary particles. One can agree with Kedrov:

> The problem of the unity of the world loses nothing from the fact that it is treated simultaneously as a philosophical and a scientific one, but on the contrary only gains through the creative union of advanced philosophy and natural science (118:36).

But I do not share his conviction that the concept of the world as a whole and that of the unity of the world are essentially different from one another.

I have pointed out that the history of materialism begins

with the theoretical substantiation of spontaneously established convictions about the eternity of nature and matter. The development of those ideas signified a demystification of nature, and demolition of the religious-mythological interpretation of the world, for which nature was a product of the supernatural. Materialism has formulated and substantiated the principle of the material unity of the world from the very start; development of that principle led to a factual singling out of and materialist answer to the basic philosophical question. But that did not eliminate the problem of the world as a whole, which was taken further precisely on the basis of this answer, since the antithesis of mind and matter, consciousness and being, the subjective and the objective gave it the content and significance that natural philosophers had always had a very hazy notion about. That also witnesses to the many-sided content of the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question.

2. The Ontological Aspect: a Contribution to the Delineation of the Idealist Answer to the Basic Philosophical Question

Explanation of the world from itself—such is the principle of materialist philosophy that even the first, 'naive' materialist doctrines started from. And it would be a clear misunderstanding of the historical shaping of philosophy if we began to evaluate this 'direct' relation between thinking man and the world that oppresses him by its unlimited power as something that took shape of itself. The intellectual need to explain the world from itself is indubitable evidence that mankind is beginning to overcome its spontaneously formed delusions and fallacies and to recognise them as fallacies that are by no means those of separate individuals. In order to ascend even to the 'naive', 'direct' view of primitive spontaneous materialism, it was necessary to get rid of the monstrous spectres that mythology and religion had enveloped human life in, the reflection in fantasy of man's dejection by the domination of elemental forces of nature and social development.

A spontaneously formed supranatural view of the world historically preceded philosophy. Primitive materialism was the first intelligent intellectual protest against supranaturalism; it was both a critique and a denial of it. The strength and weakness of primitive materialism comes out particularly ob-

viously in its naturalistic theogony by which the gods (whose existence was not yet doubted) arose now from water, now from fire, now from some other 'substantial' matter. The supernatural was thus interpreted as natural, i.e. 'explained' from nature and so converted into a natural phenomenon. As for idealism, which took shape later, it endeavoured to defend the supranaturalist world outlook by re-interpreting it. While not discarding explanation of nature by assuming beings above nature (i.e. supernatural ones) idealism developed theoretical conceptions that gradually wiped out the antithesis between the supernatural and the natural.[6] While materialism is a denial of religion, idealism is an attempt to transform it into an intellectual outlook on the world. Idealism consequently is an ally of religion even when it reforms its traditional notions. It is in that case, moreover, that it really performs its social function, in spite of the desperate protests of conservative zealots of religion, who often see in idealism refined heresy. The young Marx probably had that in mind when he wrote:

> all the philosophies of the past without exception have been accused by the theologians of abandoning the Christian religion, even those of the pious Malebranche and the divinely inspired Jakob Böhme (171:190).

The idealist doctrines of Greece and Rome differed essentially from the religious outlook then prevalent. It is sufficient to compare the Platonic transcendental ideas with the Olympian gods of the Homeric epic. This evolution of idealist philosophy, incidentally, also expresses the evolution of religion to some extent.

Mediaeval Christian philosophy, which took shape in an age when religion more or less directly dominated the everyday consciousness of people, put the concept of an absolutely immaterial, supernatural essence in the place of the idealist notion of antiquity of the immateriality and impersonal basis of the *universum*.[7] This return to mythology was made, however, on a new basis, since the scholastic assimilation of Plato's doctrine, and then of Aristotle's, encouraged the forming of a speculative-idealist interpretation of God as world reason. Essentially this was the forerunner of the idealist philosophy of modern times, in spite of the fact that the rising bourgeois philosophy was a repudiation in other respects of scholasticism.

It the age of the assertion of capitalism the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question was gradually more and more secularised, so acquiring a mode of expression formally

independent of theology. And while scholasticism had carried divine reason beyond the limits of finite, allegedly created nature, which it interpreted as contingent being, the idealist philosophy of modern times, while rejecting the theological disparagement of the earthly, finite, and transient, has striven to overcome the 'split' between the world and God. This philosophy developed on the background of the outstanding progress of natural science; it was often linked with the latter's advances, assimilating and interpreting them in its own way; what scholasticism had deemed supernatural, also gradually began to be interpreted as immanent to nature. The supernatural was eliminated to some extent, since divine law, according to the rationalist idealists, was essentially natural law.

While materialism had previously condemned idealist philosophy for an unsubstantiated assumption of the supernatural, idealists were now already accusing materialists of believing in miracles, for example, in the rise of consciousness from matter. Leibniz wrote: 'It is enough that we cannot maintain that matter thinks unless we attribute to it an imperishable soul, or rather a miracle' (136:166). That was not simply a polemical trick, but a natural turn in the history of idealism, since science was developing criteria of scientific character and idealism could not help allowing for them. Leibniz proclaimed it one of the urgent tasks of philosophy to draw a distinct line between the natural and the supernatural, i.e. what contradicted the laws of nature, and so reason. But, remaining an idealist, he claimed that 'it is not natural to matter to have sensation and to think' (136:165), and if they were inherent in it, then it was necessary to admit the existence of an immaterial substance within matter. It would be supernatural, he argued further, if people were mortal as spiritual beings, i.e. shared the fate of their mortal transitory body. So 'souls are naturally immortal' and '... it would be a miracle if they were not' (136:166).

In Leibniz's doctrine the material was active only through its immaterial essence, a monad, which was undoubtedly created.

> Thus, in the order of nature (miracles apart) God does not arbitrarily give to substances such and such qualities indifferently, and He never gives them any but those which are natural to them, that is to say, qualities which can be derived from their nature as explicable modifications (136:164).

So, although the supernatural still formally occupied its appointed place, all the properties observed in natural phenomena were treated as necessarily inherent in them. They must

therefore be derived from nature and not from a supernatural being, which meant that the materialist principle of explaining the world from itself was no longer discarded right away but was interpreted idealistically as a mode of ascending from experiential to the superexperiential. It was necessary, Leibniz said, 'to lead men little by little by the senses to what is outside the senses' (135:70). From that angle the supersensory had to be revealed through investigation of the sense-perceived world, and the super-experiential found in experience.

Speculative idealism, which pursued the goal of going beyond any possible experience, sought points of contact with the empirical investigation of nature. In that connection it was not only interested in the results, but also in the cognitive process itself, investigation of which threw light on the nature of the objects studied.

Condillac, a thinker who wavered between materialism and idealist empiricism, formulated a principle by which the philosopher differed indeed from other people in giving everything a natural explanation:

> It is not enough for a philosopher to say that a thing has been done by extraordinary ways; it is his duty to explain how it would have been done by natural means (cited after 19:209).

Idealism also needed to accept that naturalistic principle, though not by any means without reservations, and very inconsistently. Such is the regular trend of the evolution of the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question conditioned by the development of bourgeois society. This trend comes out quite markedly even in such an unswerving theist as Bishop Berkeley.

Berkeley was an empiricist, but an idealist one. The very development of that variety of idealism was evidence of a developing need for a naturalist interpretation of this philosophy, including its theological conclusions that were in reality its hidden basic principles.

The reduction of sense-perceived reality to a variety of combinations of sensations was the central point of Berkeley's doctrine. To be was to be perceived. But then where did God come from, to whom Berkeley in the final analysis led his readers? For the idea of God, as Berkeley's predecessors had shown, could not be drawn from experience; His existence was comprehended through our innate ideas and by a priori principles, and by means of intellectual intuition or inferences. Berkeley categorically disagreed with these rationalist notions, which he qualified, not without grounds, as unconvinc-

ing. According to his doctrine we comprehended the existence of God empirically; our sensations were not perceptions of mythological things but perceptions, though not direct, of God himself.

The course of the Irish bishop's thought is interesting. He did not evade the question of the *external source* of the diversity of the sense data at the disposal of the human individual. He strove simply to show that the causes of sensations could not be things, because what we called things, and considered without grounds to be something different from our sensations, were built up wholly from sensations. There must consequently be some other external source of the inexhaustible diversity of sensations (such is the logic of the *subjective* idealist), since man himself (in whom these sensations are revealed, discovered, and realised in a quite involuntary way) could not be it. The source of our sensations, Berkeley concluded, could only be God; He gave them to man, who had to see in them signs and symbols that carried God's word.

Berkeley's mystic idealism (as Kant aptly christened it) claimed that nothing separated man and God (except materialist misconceptions, of course), since nature or matter did not exist as a reality independent of consciousness. The revelation of God was directly accessible to man, according to this doctrine; it was the sense-perceived world, the world of man's sensations, which came to him from on high for him to decipher and so grasp the divine purpose.

The God of Berkeleian philosophy differed notably from the All-Highest of traditional Christian dogma; He permanently revealed himself to man and, so to say, existed in everything, or rather in every combination of sensations. Man saw, heard, and perceived or felt the divine presence, as it were, and it only remained for him to be aware of that fact, correspondingly comprehending his sensations.

It is specially obvious from the example of Berkeley that the difference between subjective and objective idealism should not be exaggerated. Subjective idealism does not, as a rule, go beyond an epistemological interpretation of the facts of knowledge or experiences. If it leaves the question of the ontological premisses of cognition and emotional life open, that is agnosticism of a Humean hue. If, on the contrary, however, it goes beyond a purely epistemological analysis, it is inevitably combined with objective idealism, as happened not only with Berkeley but also with Fichte. Kosing correctly notes:

> The boundaries between subjective and objective idealism are fluid, because subjective idealists generally, in order to avoid the conclusions of solipsism, aim mainly at broadening individual consciousness into a general one (for instance, Rickert's consciousness in general or epistemological subject) (124:72).

Research workers of a positivist turn usually try to show that subjective idealism is free of the supernaturalist assumptions proper to objective idealism. In fact both versions of the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question make contact in their main trends.

Berkeley's transition to a stance of a kind of Platonism with a clearly expressed pantheistic colouring was not accidental; his subjective idealism was meant from the start to substantiate the religious outlook. Nevertheless Western workers appraise Berkeleianism as a system of 'natural realism', a philosophy of common sense, and so on.

Idealist philosophy thus acquired its own interpretation of the spiritual first principle during the development of bourgeois society; without, in essence, breaking with religious belief in a supernatural being, it eliminated the personal characteristics attributed to this being by theology, and tended more and more to a pantheistic denial of the theological antithesis of God and nature, God and humanity. While materialist philosophy gradually overcame pantheism, objective idealism found in it the sought-for bourgeois secularisation of the religious outlook.

Pantheistic tendencies were most fully represented in classical German idealism in the philosophy of Hegel; he transformed Spinoza's materialist pantheism into an idealist panlogism. His 'absolute idea', which he frequently directly called God, was an impersonal logical process, superhuman but not supernatural, because 'Mind has for its *presupposition* Nature' (87:163), although, of course, 'it is Spirit itself which gives itself a *presupposition in Nature,* (my italics—*T.O.)* (86:295). Nature was the other-being of absolute reason, which, however, did not exist outside its own self-alienation and, consequently, outside natural and human being. The latter were not simply involved in the absolute (as Neoplatonism asserts) but constituted an attributive form of its existence and self-consciousness.[8]

Feuerbach defined pantheism as a doctrine that did not distinguish the essence of God from the essence of nature and man, i.e. a doctrine that secularised theological notions but did not fully break with them. In his studies in the history

of philosophy he showed that idealist philosophy came to pantheism by virtue of the inner logic of its development. Its primary premisses had a theistic character, but theism, too, in so far as it acquired a speculative form, became pantheism. What then was the attitude of pantheism to the radical antithesis between materialism and idealism? Feuerbach said: 'Pantheism therefore unites atheism with theism, i.e. the *negation* of God with God... It is *theological atheism, theological materialism, the negation of theology,* but all this from the *standpoint* of theology (57:297). Elsewhere, however, he asserted with no less grounds that 'idealism is the truth of pantheism' (57:302). These different appraisals of pantheism express a real contradiction inherent in the pantheistic outlook, within which the radical antithesis between materialism and idealism is not only smoothed over, but even continues to be deepened.

The idealist answer to the basic philosophical question retains its content of principle in spite of the change of form, and seemingly precisely because of this change, since it otherwise could not resist the facts refuting it that the sciences of nature, society, and man are discovering and materialistically interpreting.

The idealistic notion of the spirit arose from prescientific introspection, the impelling motives of which, at least for a long time, were not so much connected with intellectual curiosity as linked with fear and man's actual helplessness in face of the elemental forces of nature that dominated him. Idealism mystified these forces, which it interpreted as supernatural beings. Mystification of the human psyche gave rise to the idealist notion of a superhuman spirit. But these speculations also retained a certain link with reality, i.e. with nature and the human psyche, which played the role of a springboard from which idealism broke into the absolute intellectual vacuum in which, as Goethe said:

> Naught, in the everlasting void afar,
> Wilt see, nor hear thy footfall's sound,
> Nor fore thy tread find solid ground! (76:II, 218)

The history of idealism indicates that it, while despairing of the possibility of a positive, profound description of the supernatural and superhuman, and rejecting fruitless attempts to demonstrate the existence of the transcendental absolute logically, did not renounce the goal that inspired it. It began to concern itself with a scrupulous analysis of empirically established, scientifically proven facts which it no longer,

at least directly, rejected but interpreted contrary to their actual, materialist sense. In other words, while idealism flourished in the past in those domains that scientific research did not touch, now, partly conscious of the groundlessness of its former speculative constructs and partly finding itself 'surrounded' as a consequence of the increasing expansion of science, it is trying to root itself in science's own soil, so as to live parasitically on its often intransient achievements rather than on its ephemeral flaws. This tendency, born in the seventeenth century, became particularly influential in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and has won a dominating position in our day.[9]

Schopenhauer was perhaps the first idealist philosopher to treat reason and consciousness as physiologically conditioned. He identified himself with natural science on this question, while nevertheless taking an idealist stance.[10] The idealist answer to the basic philosophical question does not necessarily consist in the primary being *directly* interpreted as consciousness, thought, or reason. That understanding of the primary is characteristic of rationalist idealism. Its antithesis within the idealist trend is irrationalism. The latter rejects the thesis of the primacy of reason, thought, and consciousness, arguing that these intellectual forms of the spirit are secondary; only will, the unconscious, the irrational 'vital impulse', etc., are primary. It would therefore be an oversimplification or a dogmatic ignoring of the real tendencies of development of idealism to reduce its interpretation of the 'spiritual-material' relation to a monolinear stereotype: consciousness (thought) is primary, matter (being) secondary. The irrationalist interpretation of the primary principle is often counterposed both to the materialist and to the idealist (rationalist) answer to the basic philosophical question. That was characteristic of the 'philosophy of life' that interpreted life (its initial concept) as something nonspiritual but at the same time immaterial.

A peculiar feature of this idealist interpretation of life was that life itself was declared to be primary and substantial. In that connection, however, life was regarded as unconscious, psychic activity manifesting itself in instincts, inclinations, etc. So we see that analysis of the diversity of idealist answers to the basic philosophical question is a vital task of the history of philosophy, because only a special inquiry into this diversity can bring out the inherent internal unity of the answers. Where there is no understanding of this

unity, the various versions of idealism are often taken as philosophical trends independent of it.

A paradoxical form of the idealist answer is denial of the existence of consciousness and the spiritual in general. This position is usually associated with vulgar materialism, but there is also an idealist denial of the reality of consciousness, which should be called *vulgar idealism*.

If Hegel claimed that 'all content, everything objective, is only in relation to consciousness' (85:I, 374), Nietzsche, rejecting rationalist idealism, proclaimed a thesis at first glance quite alien to idealism: 'there is no intelligible world' (196:326). This denial of spirituousness was associated with a spiritualistic interpretation of life and human corporeality, i.e. had nothing in common with the materialist understanding of the spiritual as a specific property of the material. Nietzsche did not, in essence, deny the spiritual; he was opposed only to its rationalist-idealist interpretation, the central point of which was recognition of the substantiality of reason and of rational reality.

In contrast to Nietzsche, William James attempted to show, from a stance of idealist empiricism (not alien, incidentally, to irrationalism), that the existence of consciousness was no more than an illusion stemming from the fact that things not only existed but are also differentiated and cognised by man. There were thus things and witnesses of the fact; what was called consciousness, say, of a colour did not include anything except this colour. Consciousness was consequently something illusory.

> That entity [consciousness] is fictitious, while thoughts in the concrete are fully real. But thoughts in the concrete are made of the same stuff as things are (110:183).

What was this 'stuff' from which things and thoughts were formed? It was not, of course, matter, though James called it 'material' and even 'primal stuff'. But listen to James himself:

> if we start with the supposition that there is only one primal stuff or material in the world, a stuff of which everything is composed, and if we call that stuff 'pure experience', then knowing can easily be explained as a particular sort of relation towards one another into which portions of pure experience may enter. The relation itself is a part of pure experience; one of its 'terms' becomes the subject or bearer of the knowledge, the knower (110:170)."

It will readily be understood that this denial of the reality of consciousness (and the spiritual in general) has an illusory character: 'pure experience', in spite of James' convic-

tions, is something spiritual that includes consciousness. But it was that which James denied just as the empiriocritics denied the subjectivity of sensations (treating them as neutral, i.e. neither material nor spiritual, elements of both the physical and the psychic). James argued more simply, perhaps: he declared the spiritual ('pure experience') to be the material. So the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question acquired a materialist appearance that deceived certain behaviourists as well, who based themselves on James' doctrine. Roback, for instance, argued that 'behaviorism ... is merely a philosophical attitude as applied to the subject-matter of psychology. This attitude will be recognised as that of materialism' (222:32-22). James' point of view has been taken in our day by certain influential idealist scholars who are orientated on behaviourist psychology and interpret the cybernetic modelling of mental actions subjectively. Adherents of the philosophy of linguistic analysis, for instance, suggest rejecting such concepts as 'consciousness', 'thought', 'sensation', and 'subjective', replacing all these (as they suggest) unscientific, ordinary notions or 'pseudoconcepts' by a description of the corresponding actions and processes performed in the nervous system. That point of view has been systematically set out in Ryle's *Concept of Mind* (1949). Flew, a follower of Ryle's, claims that this book, and Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (1953) must be acknowledged "as major contributions to materialist philosophy' (63:110).

How can denial of the reality of consciousness (and the spiritual in general) be combined with idealism? The kernel of this idealism, which undoubtedly differs from the traditional doctrine of the dependence of the material on the spiritual, consists in reducing all our knowledge about objective reality to reactions of various kind to external stimulation, i.e. in denial of an objective content of our notions. The purposiveness of human behaviour, which presupposes adequate response reactions to effects from outside, is characterised as activity that does not include any sort of knowledge about the external world. The images of objects of the external world that exist in man's consciousness are treated as physiological states, and not a reflection of reality.[12] Linguistic or ordinary language philosophy, basing itself on behaviourist psychology, which identifies mind and behaviour (i.e. the aggregate of actions), in the end concludes that the concept of objective reality has sense only when there is consciousness. Denial of consciousness thus proves to be a means of denying objective reality.

Analytical philosophers reduce thought to an aggregate of operations that can also be performed by a machine. The process of cognition is interpreted in roughly the same way; knowing is treated as a proper combining (corresponding to the purpose of the machine) of signs and elements of ordinary language, or an artificial one. In the last analysis man's emotional life, too, is reduced to movements of various kind, and combinations of same, which form what are called, in common speech, joy, grief, anger, compassion, love, etc. An automatic machine is put in the place of man who perceives the reality around him (including other people) and cognises, understands, feels, experiences, and acts accordingly, though far from always rationally. The automaton, of course, does not feel, does not experience, does not think but it performs all the actions inherent in the 'feeling', 'experiencing', 'thinking' being. So it is said to be proved that no feelings or emotions, no experiences, no thoughts exist; all are a special kind of illusion that will sooner or later be reduced to machine acts. Such are some of the extremely subjectivist and agnostic conclusions of the 'philosophy of linguistic analysis'. In several respects they border on vulgar materialism, which is not surprising, for the vulgar materialists of the nineteenth century often came to extravagant subjectivist and agnostic conclusions.

Idealism's denial of the reality of the spiritual is not the sole *metamorphosed* form of the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question. An even commoner version consists in interpreting the material as essentially immaterial, this creates an appearance as if idealism, like its antipode, accepts something material as primary, for example a law, energy, time, nature, etc. But the idealist deprives this material of its real properties, citing modern physics in that connection, which is claimed to have proven that the material is essentially immaterial.

The idealist philosopher Ostwald employed the concept of energy as substantial essence as a fundamental principle, which he declared to be neutral in relation to the material and the spiritual, forming the essence of both. In counterposing energy to matter he argued that it was immaterial. The antithesis of energy and the spiritual served to substantiate the thesis that energy was not a spiritual essence. On closer examination, however, it turned out that Ostwald was trying, by distinguishing energy from substance (which he identified with matter) and from human consciousness (the subjective), to create an objective-idealist natural-philosophical system related to Schelling's philosophy of identity.[13]

Bergson's undisguised idealist philosophy started from the concept of duration (*durée*), which was essentially time, i.e. something material. He considered duration to be something different from physical time. He counterposed duration (time) to matter and reason as some supernatural creative force (eternal becoming, *élan vital*) the products of whose decay were, on the one hand, matter, and on the other, intellect associated with it. The material, so idealistically interpreted, became the point of departure of an irrationalist system. It was probably this kind of idealism that Lenin had in mind when he said: 'time outside temporal things=God' (144:70). We see that the essence of the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question is not directly revealed in what *is called* primary. One has to clarify what content the concept of the primary is invested with. Only then does it become obvious what is the character of an answer to the basic question that is considered non-idealist.

The modernisation of the idealist answer, the idealist interpretation of the materialist answer, the 'acknowledgement' of the material fobbed off as immaterial—all these latest methods of substantiating idealism and reconciling it with science (materialist at bottom) show that it remains idealism even when it *formally* rejects the traditional idealist answer to the basic question of philosophy. The nub of this idealist revision of idealism, which must be treated as a transformation of its form, was profoundly revealed by Lenin in his critique of the Russian Social-Democratic epigones of Machism. In his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* he showed that even the subjective idealist is sometimes ready to declare nature primary, but only on condition that it is understood as an aggregate of the data of experience, as something that posits a subject perceiving it. That is how the subjective idealist Bogdanov interpreted nature, when affirming that his initial propositions 'fully accord with the sacramental formula of the primacy of nature over mind' (cited from 142:207). Criticising this sophisticated mystification of the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question, Lenin wrote:

> The physical world is called the *experience of men* and it is declared that physical experience is '*higher*' in the chain of development than psychical... It is simply farcical for Bogdanov to class this 'system' as materialism. With me, too, he says, nature is primary and mind is secondary. ... Not a single idealist will deny the primacy of nature taken in this sense, for it is not a genuine primacy, since in fact nature is not taken as the *immediately* given, as the starting point of epistemology (142:208).

necessary here. It should not be supposed that everything that is not chance is necessary or inevitable. Definite possibilities (including that of the origin of life in certain conditions), for instance, are not something haphazard or chance. But the concept of necessity is inapplicable to possibilities of that kind precisely because any possibility is necessarily contradicted by its negation. Any possibility posits the existence of another one as a condition of its existence as a possibility. In that connection Shklovsky remarked with reason:

> One cannot, of course, exclude the possibility in principle that in the contemporary age Earth is the sole focus of intelligent life in the Galaxy and, who knows, perhaps also in considerably greater spacetime regions of the Universe. It is worth philosophers' while to ponder seriously about that possibility. Problems of a quite non-trivial character arise here, it would seem, especially when one allows for the circumstance that the length of the 'psychozoic' era on Earth may be limited (246:62).

The question of the primary thus has nothing in common, in its materialist (and even more dialectical-materialist) posing, with the mythological notion of a primaeval chaos that is often ascribed to materialism by its critics. The counterposing of the material to the spiritual means only that the existence of matter does not presuppose a necessity for consciousness to exist. The spiritual on the contrary, however, does not exist without matter. The counterposing of spiritual and material consequently

> has absolute significance only within the bounds of a very limited field—in this case exclusively within the bounds of the fundamental epistemological problem of what is to be regarded as primary and what as secondary. Beyond these bounds the relative character of this antithesis is indubitable (142:131).

This proposition of Lenin's indicates that an absolute counterposing of spiritual and material is incompatible with materialism; it constitutes the essence of philosophical dualism, which substantialises the antithesis of spiritual and material. Idealism, too, often starts from a thesis of the absolute antithesis of the psychic and the physical, assuming at the same time that this relation of absolute incompatibility is removed by the supernatural spirit.

From the standpoint of dialectical materialism the spiritual is an immaterial property of the material, its immateriality, moreover, not consisting in anything transphysical; the nature of this immateriality is expressed by the epistemological concept of reflection.

The difference of principle of the philosophy of Marxism from the preceding materialism finds direct expression not only

logical aspect. The pre-Marxian materialists defined matter as substance or body, and this characteristic of objective reality, drawn from mechanistic natural science, provided no notion of the peculiarities of material social relations and of the spiritual processes caused by them. It became possible to overcome that historical limitation of pre-Marxian materialism through the discovery and investigation of the specific material basis of social life.

The history of philosophy thus brings out various types of materialist answer to the basic philosophical question, corresponding to the main stages in the development and to the most important forms of materialist philosophy. The dialectical-materialist answer sums up the centuries-long history of this question, which deserves special investigation. Such an inquiry, of course, is beyond the scope of my book, yet a brief excursus into history is necessary for a proper understanding of the content and significance of the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question.

The materialist natural philosophy of the ancients—the first historical form of philosophical thought—did not yet single out the concept of the psychic as something different from the material, although the term 'spirit' was employed, with which, it seems, concepts were associated that were derived both from everyday experience and from mythology. Thales supposed that a magnet had a soul, i.e. tried to explain the phenomenon of magnetism in that way; the concept of soul served him to explain a far from spiritual phenomenon.

The fact that Thales, incidentally, drew on the notion of a spirit to explain such a mysterious phenomenon for his time as magnetism indicates that special properties were still ascribed to the soul. According to Herakleitos it was not simply a flame, but the most perfect state of fire, free of moisture. Democritos considered it composed of very smooth, round atoms. The spiritual was then still not counterposed to matter as something qualitatively different, though derived from it. This undeveloped character of the notion of the spiritual was a main reason why the materialist philosophy of antiquity, as Engels stressed, 'was incapable of clearing up the relation between mind and matter' (50:159). This philosophy treated qualitative differences as significant only from the standpoint of everyday consciousness ('opinion'). Philosophical consciousness, having fixed the identity of the aggregate states of water, judged all other observed states by analogy with it. The original natural materialism, Engels pointed out,

unity became problematic. Subsequently it was more and more often called in question, with the consequence that the qualitatively heterogeneous phenomena of nature were systematically and specially investigated by isolating them from one another. The primitive naive notion of the universal interdependence and interconversion of natural phenomena, which was based on a proposition of their substantial identity, gave way to a metaphysical view that interpreted the qualitative differences between things as evidence of their essential independence of one another. Yet the idea of the unity of the world did not get consigned to oblivion. It was constantly revived by natural science and philosophy in the course of their development. Both materialism and idealism, and both metaphysically thinking philosophers and dialecticians, defended and substantiated the idea of the unity of the world, each, of course, in his own key.

The moulding of the materialism of modern times was closely linked with the revival of Greek cosmological doctrines that preceded this historical process in the natural-philosophy systems of the Renaissance. The natural philosophers of the beginning of the seventeenth century developed the view of the atomistic materialism of antiquity about the infinite *universum*, which received a natural-science substantiation for the first time through Copernicus' system and the corrections introduced into it by Giordano Bruno.

The idea of the space-time infinity of the universe smashed the scholastic notion of the radical antithesis of heavenly 'matter' to base earthly substance. The dualism of matter and form was also shattered along with that of the earthly and the heavenly, i.e. the Aristotelian-scholastic hylomorphism that interpreted matter only as material for the creative activity of a supernatural spirit. The infinity of the *universum* was comprehended as an unlimited diversity of the potentials contained in matter, and as evidence that matter was not confined to any limits; it was universal reality, a unique and single world.

The hylozoism of the ancients was reborn in the organicist conceptions of natural philosophers who ascribed vegetable and animal functions to metals and minerals. Those views undermined the theological, scholastic dogmas about the supernatural character of the spiritual, and denied the theological division of the world into this one and the other.[1] The pantheistic identification, typical of mediaeval ideology, also provided substantiation of the principle of material unity, since it led to denial of God.

The materialists of modern times, unlike their predecessors,

tions that we see in the universe' (103:11). In opposition to materialism the idealist conception of the unity of the world inevitably includes a latent dualism of spiritual and material. I must stress, incidentally, that recognition of the unity of the world and the concept 'the world as a whole' do not fully cover one another. Idealist philosophers, who counterpose a dualist or pluralist interpretation to the principle of the unity of the world, in no way eliminate the concept of the world as a whole even when they deny it. They only interpret the whole world dualistically or pluralistically. Even irrationalists, for whom the world and the universe are something like chaos, ruling out order of any kind, interpret the world as a whole in their own way. But only materialism indissolubly links the concepts of the world as a whole and of the unity of the world as the essential content of its materiality.

Any attempts to picture matters as if the questions of the world as a whole and of the unity of the world were essentially different ones are therefore in principle unsound. For the materialist the concept of the unity of the world is a concretisation of the more general one of 'the world as a whole', since to recognise the unity of the world and at the same time to deny the legitimacy of the philosophical concept of the world as a whole (as some Marxists unfortunately do) means to admit quite incompatible statements.

The principle of the material unity of the world does not simply precede the comprehensive materialist posing of the basic philosophical question historically. In that case it could seem to be the natural-philosophy past of modern materialism. But this principle is one of the most important aspects of the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question, from which it follows that the concept of the world as a whole, too, continues to be developed and enriched by new content disclosing the *unity of an endless* diversity of phenomena.

Pre-Marxian materialists spoke of the *great whole* of nature. In our day the expression often provokes an indulgent smile, since the world as a whole cannot directly be the object of knowing. Neopositivists especially make fun of this kind of 'archaic', 'natural philosophy' turn of phrase. 'To be real in the scientific sense', Carnap, for example, declares, 'means to be an element of the system; hence this concept cannot be meaningfully applied to the system itself' (30:207). In other words, one system or another can only be the object of inquiry when it itself is a subsystem, i.e. an element of another system. The world as a whole cannot be singled out as a subsystem, and so is unreal in the sci-

It is necessary, consequently, to return to the thesis that the world as a whole cannot be the object of knowing. This is correct in the sense that investigation posits singling out of the object of inquiry, but a procedure of that kind is impracticable as regards the world as whole. There is no tower from which one could observe the whole world; that must not only be understood literally but also taken in the figurative sense.[2] But it does not follow from this, as the contemporary West German idealist philosopher Leisegang claims, that

> the world as a whole, the universe, and nature are something outside experience. We see and experience always only this or that in the world, this or that which nature has produced, but never the world, or nature, as such and as a whole (137:72).

It is very notable that Leisegang equates the world as a whole, the universe, and nature with one another. In fact, for one who denies the possibility of cognising the world as a whole, all objective reality proves to be unknowable.

In stressing the unlimited qualitative diversity of the universe, we do not simply establish a methodological postulate that possibly comes into contradiction with the principle of the unity of the world, but we formulate a conclusion that sums up the whole history of knowledge. And that conclusion, like many other propositions of natural science (about which I shall speak below), refers to *the world as a whole*. When we say that there are no objective limits to knowing the world, we are once again arguing about the world as a whole. But how are judgments of that kind possible? They are possible primarily because there are no absolute antitheses in the ontological sense. Whatever 'marvellous' phenomena cosmology has discovered, we are quite justified in claiming that they will not be wholly incompatible with those already known to science. There are no grounds for assuming that cosmology or any other science will discover somewhere that which the theologists and scholastics of the Middle Ages tried to discover at distances incomparably closer to our planet. Natural science confirms the scientific, atheistic conviction that there is nothing absolutely opposite to what exists and what is already known. Difference posits identity and is inseparable from it. Diversity and unity do not exclude one another. Heterogeneity, like homogeneity, is not absolute. An 'antiworld' in the precise full sense of the term is impossible; it fixes antitheses, whose relativity is attested by their constantly being revealed unity. In the 'antiworld' the material does not become a product of the spiritual; any feature of the 'antiworld' exists in a certain natural relation with its antipode. These general propositions

empiricism takes up a more flexible epistemological position, since science successfully anticipates unobservable phenomena, establishes their existence, and in the final analysis makes them observable indirectly, if not directly. True, the unobservable object called 'the world as a whole' cannot be recorded even negatively like, for example, a filtrable virus. While space probes have photographed the far side of the moon, unobservable from the earth (recognition of the existence of which was deemed scientifically senseless by neopositivists because of the unverifiability of the relevant statements), one will never fly around the world as a whole, of course, in a space probe. But one must not understand singling out of the object of inquiry in an oversimplified way. Science singles out not only the individual and the particular, but also the general, and even the universal, i.e. a definiteness of phenomena that it relates to all phenomena *without exception*, or in other words to the world as a whole. The universalisation of scientific propositions of that kind is far from always justified, of course, but even then science gets the chance to establish its frontiers, i.e. to concretise universality. The discovery of laws of nature is the singling out of the most general, necessary, and recurring relations that apply at least *partially* to the world as a whole, even if only because the part of a whole is not something foreign to it but includes the nature of the whole to some extent or other (and this has, of course, to be investigated).

Necessity and universality are inseparable. But not every statement about universality applies to the world as a whole. And it is impossible to establish a priori that it does not apply to everything that exists; that, too, has to be proved. Limitation of the universality of laws and scientific propositions is just as difficult a research task in general as substantiation of their universality.

The law of *universal* gravitation was discovered by Newton precisely as a law of the *universum*. And that constitutes the nub of the discovery, because terrestrial attraction was known before Newton; it had been recorded in the law of falling bodies discovered by Galileo. Newton's genius in this case was that he extended the idea of attraction to the whole universe, which was incompatible with common sense since it called for the assumption of *actio in distans* and was fraught with paradoxes that Newton tried to avoid by means of theological assumptions. Yet the law he discovered was confirmed by subsequent research and experiments, and is still being confirmed today. That does not mean that its universality will never be limited. More essenti-

proves on closer examination to be a superficial, empiricist one, for empiricists have always asserted that we know the finite, and that the infinite is unfathomable.

The real problem is something else; how to study the world as a whole? How is this cognitive process performed? How far can scientific propositions regarded as referring to the whole *universum* be rigorously substantiated? Are they not destined to remain hypotheses for ever? Dialectical-materialist analysis of the process of cognition gives an answer to that in general form; in knowing the finite, individual, passing, and partial, we at the same time (within certain limits, of course) know the infinite, general, intransient, and whole. As Engels put it:

> In fact all real, exhaustive knowledge consists solely in raising the individual thing in thought from individuality into particularity and from this into universality, in seeking and establishing the infinite in the finite, the eternal in the transitory. The form of universality, however, is the form of self-completeness, hence of infinity; it is the comprehension of the many finites in the infinite.... All true knowledge of nature is knowledge of the eternal, the infinite, and hence essentially absolute (51:234).

Comprehension of the world as a whole is thus the mediated result of scientific cognition in respect of a certain 'section' of the *universum,* and not simply of the whole conceivable aggregate of existing and possible phenomena. If everything consists of atoms, for example, and of the elementary particles that form them, then atomic physics studies the world as a whole, though it does not study psychic processes, social life, etc. If, say, the proposition of quantum mechanics that the dualism of wave-particles is absolutely general, applying to the whole physical world, is correct, then here, too, it is a matter of study of the world as a whole. Recognition of that has nothing in common with justification of the unscientific, metaphysical assumption of the possibility of absolute knowledge, which is incompatible with materialist dialectics.

In saying that physics and certain other fundamental sciences study the world as a whole, we also start from the assumption that the unity of the world (the world as whole) is revealed in its parts, and so in special fields of scientific inquiry. The whole of the universum, then, must not be understood as an external aggregate of parts, but rather as something inner, i.e. as the nature of the whole, which incidentally is expressed by dialectical laws and categorial relations. It is also important to stress that recognition of the reality of definite (of course, limited) knowledge of the world as a whole not only has ideological and meth-

> The interconnection of the sciences reflects the interconnection of phenomena in reality itself. The problem of the interconnection of the sciences is one of the unity of the world and a qualitative feature of its different fields (54:138).

The expression 'to cognise the world as a whole' is often understood quite wrongly, as if it were a matter of posing the task of cognising all and everything, summing up all knowledge, and so on, ignoring the historically formed division of labour in the scientific field. Authors who argue in that manner usually affirm that only all the sciences taken together study the world as a whole, while each separate science deals with some part or facet of the world. Views of that kind do not, in my view, touch the nub of the question posed here. Study of the world as a whole has nothing in common, of course, with claims to comprehend all and everything (everything that existed in the past, exists now, and what will be) or to substitute some sort of special science for the whole aggregate of existing scientific disciplines. From my point of view, the whole aggregate of presently existing sciences does not dispose of knowledge of the whole, since new branches of science will arise, and now unknown fields of research will be discovered that will essentially alter our notions of the *universum*.

Engels remarked that Greek philosophy had already anticipated the correct notion that

> the whole of nature, from the smallest element to the greatest, from grains of sand to suns, from *Protista* to man, has its existence in eternal coming into being and passing away, in ceaseless flux, in unresting motion and change (51:30-31).

That understanding of the world as a whole, at which the Greek philosophers had only brilliantly guessed, has become one of the most vital theoretical propositions not only of the dialectical-materialist outlook on the world but also of concrete, scientific research.

The unity of the world—it is constantly necessary to stress—is not demonstrated by speculative, logical arguments, but by the whole edifying history of science and material production. The scientific philosophical summing-up and comprehension of this world-historical process not only rejects the idealist notions of the immaterial essence of the material or the supernatural essence of the spiritual, but also helps bring out and describe the diverse forms of the material unity of the world. Philosophy, it goes without saying, studies the world as a whole and the unity of the world only in a certain aspect, since it wholly excludes the specific problematic of the special sciences. It does not require

> must fill in the countless gaps with *figments of his own imagination* (50:386).

Warning against the systematics of natural philosophy, which squeezes the infinite whole into the Procrustean bed of always historically limited knowledge, Engels (we see) did not consider knowledge of the world as a whole an idle business. He simply pointed out the dialectical contradictoriness of this cognitive process:

> cognition of the infinite is therefore beset with double difficulty and from its very nature can only take place in an infinite asymptotic progress. And that fully suffices us in order to be able to say: the infinite is just as much knowable as unknowable, and that is all that we need (51:234-235).

Engels thus fought against two metaphysical extremes; on the one hand, against denial of the knowability in principle of the world as a whole and, on the other, against the dogmatic understanding that made an absolute of the knowledge of the world as a whole that science already to some extent disposed of.

The philosophy of Marxism bases itself in its statements about the *universum* on the results obtained by *all the sciences* of nature and society. But that is why its conclusions naturally do not coincide with those arrived at by each of these sciences. Both philosophical statements about the world as a whole and about particular sciences are absolutely ineradicable, necessary, and heuristically fruitful when they have (1) a materialist, and (2) a dialectical character. Let philosophers who think themselves spokesmen of a scientific outlook on the world, try to manage without 'metaphysical', 'ontological', and 'natural-philosophical' statements of such a kind. Materialism, of course, is a system of logically interconnected theoretical propositions. I shall list a few, apologising in advance to the reader to whom I am communicating nothing new in this case. The unity of the world consists in its materiality. Matter is uncreatable and indestructible. Consciousness is a product of the development of matter. Motion is the form of existence of matter. Matter exists in space and time. The world is knowable in principle. Do all these statements relate to the world as a whole or only to that part of it that has already been mastered by science and practice? Positivists and other spokesmen of the contemporary subjective-agnostic philosophy of science reject these propositions, declaring them to lack scientific sense, and come quite logically to an absolute relativism.

Some of them, incidentally, have already begun to revise their former denial of the comprehensibility of the concept of the

with the theoretical substantiation of spontaneously established convictions about the eternity of nature and matter. The development of those ideas signified a demystification of nature, and demolition of the religious-mythological interpretation of the world, for which nature was a product of the supernatural. Materialism has formulated and substantiated the principle of the material unity of the world from the very start; development of that principle led to a factual singling out of and materialist answer to the basic philosophical question. But that did not eliminate the problem of the world as a whole, which was taken further precisely on the basis of this answer, since the antithesis of mind and matter, consciousness and being, the subjective and the objective gave it the content and significance that natural philosophers had always had a very hazy notion about. That also witnesses to the many-sided content of the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question.

2. The Ontological Aspect: a Contribution to the Delineation of the Idealist Answer to the Basic Philosophical Question

Explanation of the world from itself—such is the principle of materialist philosophy that even the first, 'naive' materialist doctrines started from. And it would be a clear misunderstanding of the historical shaping of philosophy if we began to evaluate this 'direct' relation between thinking man and the world that oppresses him by its unlimited power as something that took shape of itself. The intellectual need to explain the world from itself is indubitable evidence that mankind is beginning to overcome its spontaneously formed delusions and fallacies and to recognise them as fallacies that are by no means those of separate individuals. In order to ascend even to the 'naive', 'direct' view of primitive spontaneous materialism, it was necessary to get rid of the monstrous spectres that mythology and religion had enveloped human life in, the reflection in fantasy of man's dejection by the domination of elemental forces of nature and social development.

A spontaneously formed supranatural view of the world historically preceded philosophy. Primitive materialism was the first intelligent intellectual protest against supranaturalism; it was both a critique and a denial of it. The strength and weakness of primitive materialism comes out particularly ob-

independent of theology. And while scholasticism had carried divine reason beyond the limits of finite, allegedly created nature, which it interpreted as contingent being, the idealist philosophy of modern times, while rejecting the theological disparagement of the earthly, finite, and transient, has striven to overcome the 'split' between the world and God. This philosophy developed on the background of the outstanding progress of natural science; it was often linked with the latter's advances, assimilating and interpreting them in its own way; what scholasticism had deemed supernatural, also gradually began to be interpreted as immanent to nature. The supernatural was eliminated to some extent, since divine law, according to the rationalist idealists, was essentially natural law.

While materialism had previously condemned idealist philosophy for an unsubstantiated assumption of the supernatural, idealists were now already accusing materialists of believing in miracles, for example, in the rise of consciousness from matter. Leibniz wrote: 'It is enough that we cannot maintain that matter thinks unless we attribute to it an imperishable soul, or rather a miracle' (136:166). That was not simply a polemical trick, but a natural turn in the history of idealism, since science was developing criteria of scientific character and idealism could not help allowing for them. Leibniz proclaimed it one of the urgent tasks of philosophy to draw a distinct line between the natural and the supernatural, i.e. what contradicted the laws of nature, and so reason. But, remaining an idealist, he claimed that 'it is not natural to matter to have sensation and to think' (136:165), and if they were inherent in it, then it was necessary to admit the existence of an immaterial substance within matter. It would be supernatural, he argued further, if people were mortal as spiritual beings, i.e. shared the fate of their mortal transitory body. So 'souls are naturally immortal' and '... it would be a miracle if they were not' (136:166).

In Leibniz's doctrine the material was active only through its immaterial essence, a monad, which was undoubtedly created.

> Thus, in the order of nature (miracles apart) God does not arbitrarily give to substances such and such qualities indifferently, and He never gives them any but those which are natural to them, that is to say, qualities which can be derived from their nature as explicable modifications (136:164).

So, although the supernatural still formally occupied its appointed place, all the properties observed in natural phenomena were treated as necessarily inherent in them. They must

ing. According to his doctrine we comprehended the existence of God empirically; our sensations were not perceptions of mythological things but perceptions, though not direct, of God himself.

The course of the Irish bishop's thought is interesting. He did not evade the question of the *external source* of the diversity of the sense data at the disposal of the human individual. He strove simply to show that the causes of sensations could not be things, because what we called things, and considered without grounds to be something different from our sensations, were built up wholly from sensations. There must consequently be some other external source of the inexhaustible diversity of sensations (such is the logic of the *subjective* idealist), since man himself (in whom these sensations are revealed, discovered, and realised in a quite involuntary way) could not be it. The source of our sensations, Berkeley concluded, could only be God; He gave them to man, who had to see in them signs and symbols that carried God's word.

Berkeley's mystic idealism (as Kant aptly christened it) claimed that nothing separated man and God (except materialist misconceptions, of course), since nature or matter did not exist as a reality independent of consciousness. The revelation of God was directly accessible to man, according to this doctrine; it was the sense-perceived world, the world of man's sensations, which came to him from on high for him to decipher and so grasp the divine purpose.

The God of Berkeleian philosophy differed notably from the All-Highest of traditional Christian dogma; He permanently revealed himself to man and, so to say, existed in everything, or rather in every combination of sensations. Man saw, heard, and perceived or felt the divine presence, as it were, and it only remained for him to be aware of that fact, correspondingly comprehending his sensations.

It is specially obvious from the example of Berkeley that the difference between subjective and objective idealism should not be exaggerated. Subjective idealism does not, as a rule, go beyond an epistemological interpretation of the facts of knowledge or experiences. If it leaves the question of the ontological premisses of cognition and emotional life open, that is agnosticism of a Humean hue. If, on the contrary, however, it goes beyond a purely epistemological analysis, it is inevitably combined with objective idealism, as happened not only with Berkeley but also with Fichte. Kosing correctly notes:

of philosophy he showed that idealist philosophy came to pantheism by virtue of the inner logic of its development. Its primary premisses had a theistic character, but theism, too, in so far as it acquired a speculative form, became pantheism. What then was the attitude of pantheism to the radical antithesis between materialism and idealism? Feuerbach said: 'Pantheism therefore unites atheism with theism, i.e. the *negation* of God with God... It is *theological atheism, theological materialism, the negation of theology,* but all this from the *standpoint* of theology (57:297). Elsewhere, however, he asserted with no less grounds that 'idealism is the truth of pantheism' (57:302). These different appraisals of pantheism express a real contradiction inherent in the pantheistic outlook, within which the radical antithesis between materialism and idealism is not only smoothed over, but even continues to be deepened.

The idealist answer to the basic philosophical question retains its content of principle in spite of the change of form, and seemingly precisely because of this change, since it otherwise could not resist the facts refuting it that the sciences of nature, society, and man are discovering and materialistically interpreting.

The idealistic notion of the spirit arose from prescientific introspection, the impelling motives of which, at least for a long time, were not so much connected with intellectual curiosity as linked with fear and man's actual helplessness in face of the elemental forces of nature that dominated him. Idealism mystified these forces, which it interpreted as supernatural beings. Mystification of the human psyche gave rise to the idealist notion of a superhuman spirit. But these speculations also retained a certain link with reality, i.e. with nature and the human psyche, which played the role of a springboard from which idealism broke into the absolute intellectual vacuum in which, as Goethe said:

> Naught, in the everlasting void afar,
> Wilt see, nor hear thy footfall's sound,
> Nor fore thy tread find solid ground! (76:II, 218)

The history of idealism indicates that it, while despairing of the possibility of a positive, profound description of the supernatural and superhuman, and rejecting fruitless attempts to demonstrate the existence of the transcendental absolute logically, did not renounce the goal that inspired it. It began to concern itself with a scrupulous analysis of empirically established, scientifically proven facts which it no longer,

unity, the various versions of idealism are often taken as philosophical trends independent of it.

A paradoxical form of the idealist answer is denial of the existence of consciousness and the spiritual in general. This position is usually associated with vulgar materialism, but there is also an idealist denial of the reality of consciousness, which should be called *vulgar idealism.*

If Hegel claimed that 'all content, everything objective, is only in relation to consciousness' (85:I, 374), Nietzsche, rejecting rationalist idealism, proclaimed a thesis at first glance quite alien to idealism: 'there is no intelligible world' (196:326). This denial of spirituousness was associated with a spiritualistic interpretation of life and human corporeality, i.e. had nothing in common with the materialist understanding of the spiritual as a specific property of the material. Nietzsche did not, in essence, deny the spiritual; he was opposed only to its rationalist-idealist interpretation, the central point of which was recognition of the substantiality of reason and of rational reality.

In contrast to Nietzsche, William James attempted to show, from a stance of idealist empiricism (not alien, incidentally, to irrationalism), that the existence of consciousness was no more than an illusion stemming from the fact that things not only existed but are also differentiated and cognised by man. There were thus things and witnesses of the fact; what was called consciousness, say, of a colour did not include anything except this colour. Consciousness was consequently something illusory.

> That entity [consciousness] is fictitious, while thoughts in the concrete are fully real. But thoughts in the concrete are made of the same stuff as things are (110:183).

What was this 'stuff' from which things and thoughts were formed? It was not, of course, matter, though James called it 'material' and even 'primal stuff'. But listen to James himself:

> if we start with the supposition that there is only one primal stuff or material in the world, a stuff of which everything is composed, and if we call that stuff 'pure experience', then knowing can easily be explained as a particular sort of relation towards one another into which portions of pure experience may enter. The relation itself is a part of pure experience; one of its 'terms' becomes the subject or bearer of the knowledge, the knower (110:170).[11]

It will readily be understood that this denial of the reality of consciousness (and the spiritual in general) has an illusory character: 'pure experience', in spite of James' convic-

Analytical philosophers reduce thought to an aggregate of operations that can also be performed by a machine. The process of cognition is interpreted in roughly the same way; knowing is treated as a proper combining (corresponding to the purpose of the machine) of signs and elements of ordinary language, or an artificial one. In the last analysis man's emotional life, too, is reduced to movements of various kind, and combinations of same, which form what are called, in common speech, joy, grief, anger, compassion, love, etc. An automatic machine is put in the place of man who perceives the reality around him (including other people) and cognises, understands, feels, experiences, and acts accordingly, though far from always rationally. The automaton, of course, does not feel, does not experience, does not think but it performs all the actions inherent in the 'feeling', 'experiencing', 'thinking' being. So it is said to be proved that no feelings or emotions, no experiences, no thoughts exist; all are a special kind of illusion that will sooner or later be reduced to machine acts. Such are some of the extremely subjectivist and agnostic conclusions of the 'philosophy of linguistic analysis'. In several respects they border on vulgar materialism, which is not surprising, for the vulgar materialists of the nineteenth century often came to extravagant subjectivist and agnostic conclusions.

Idealism's denial of the reality of the spiritual is not the sole *metamorphosed* form of the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question. An even commoner version consists in interpreting the material as essentially immaterial, this creates an appearance as if idealism, like its antipode, accepts something material as primary, for example a law, energy, time, nature, etc. But the idealist deprives this material of its real properties, citing modern physics in that connection, which is claimed to have proven that the material is essentially immaterial.

The idealist philosopher Ostwald employed the concept of energy as substantial essence as a fundamental principle, which he declared to be neutral in relation to the material and the spiritual, forming the essence of both. In counterposing energy to matter he argued that it was immaterial. The antithesis of energy and the spiritual served to substantiate the thesis that energy was not a spiritual essence. On closer examination, however, it turned out that Ostwald was trying, by distinguishing energy from substance (which he identified with matter) and from human consciousness (the subjective), to create an objective-idealist natural-philosophical system related to Schelling's philosophy of identity.[13]

The whole significance of a remark Lenin made later, viz., 'nature outside, independent of matter=God' (144:69), becomes understandable in the light of his critique of one of the varieties of idealist empiricism. That remark disclosed the objective tendency of the naturalistic metamorphosis of idealism; the formal renunciation of both fideism and spiritual substance, and similarly the formal agreement with the materialist requirement to take nature as the starting point, proved to be one of the latest versions of idealism, resignedly gravitating to the same sophisticated fideism. It is not enough, however, to state this appearance of a negation of idealism; it is necessary to disclose the objective logic of the historical metamorphosis of idealist philosophy. It then becomes evident that it really is a denial, but a denial of discredited modes of idealist philosophising, while preserving its basic content. It is a denial such as turns out in fact to be a reconstruction of idealism through a renewal of its tradition and an idealist assimilation of the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question. It is thus clear that the crisis of idealist philosophy is so impressive a fact that even idealists themselves have noted it. In the second part of my book I shall give a description of this crisis in detail in connection with analysis of the struggle of the main philosophical trends. Just now I shall limit myself to pointing out that an undisputed symptom of this crisis is the critique of the idealist hypostasising of mind and reason, and irrationalist scepticism about philosophical intellectualism.

Nietzsche saw in the Miletians, Heraklitos, and other natural philosophers of antiquity a higher degree of philosophical understanding of the world than in Sokrates and his followers. It was not the materialism or dialectics of these doctrines that enraptured him; it was the cosmic frame of mind that attracted him, which he counterposed to the human, 'too human' contemplation of the world, locked in its own subjectivity. But this admirer of majestic cosmological objectivism was a clear, though inconsistent subjectivist. The same has to be said of Heidegger who, following Nietzsche, extolled the Presocratians above the later philosophers, although his own philosophy was a quite quaint mixture of extreme subjectivism and an objective-idealist postulating of an unfathomable absolute being. Contemporary idealist philosophy fully combines a leaning toward cosmic objectivism with subjectivism, which, however, has been subjected to limited criticism as a provincial view of the universe from an earthly gateway.

One of the main papers at the 14th International Congress

this answer does not define the epistemological position of a philosophy directly; acknowledgement of the knowability or, on the contrary, unknowability of the world in itself (i.e. irrespective of understanding of the process of cognition) does not provide grounds for classing a philosophy in the materialist or idealist trends.

Most materialists are consistent adherents of the principle of the knowability of the world. This principle is integrally linked in their doctrines with an explanation of the world from itself (and consequently with denial of a transcendental reality), with a high evaluation of sense experience and science, and with denial of religious humbling of the individual. But idealists, too, quite often acknowledge the knowability of the world. Most philosophers, as Engels remarked, answer this epistemological question in general in the affirmative (see 52:346). In Hegel, for instance, the principle of the knowability of the world follows directly from the fundamental proposition of his idealist system, i.e. from the identification of being and thought. Since being is the content of thought, consciousness of its own content in thought makes being knowable in principle. Nothing consequently divides mind and being except the empirical singleness of the human individual, which is overcome by his historically developing generic essence, humanity. Engels called Hegel's arguments against the agnosticism of Hume and Kant decisive, in the context of the idealist system of views, of course. To counter agnosticism Hegel proclaimed that

> the closed essence of the Universum has no power in itself that could resist the daring of perception; it must be open to it and lay its riches and depths before its eyes and lead it to delight (84:IXXV).[15]

How then is the absence of a direct link between one answer or the other to the ontological aspect of the basic philosophical question and the answer to the second, epistemological aspect to be explained? Apparently by the point that the polarisation of philosophy into materialist and idealist trends is theoretically predetermined by two alternative answers to the question of the relation of the spiritual and the material. As for the antithesis between philosophers who substantiate the principle of the knowability of the world and the sceptics (or agnostics), it is associated with two mutually exclusive interpretations of specifically human activity, which of course presupposes the existence of an external world but is not determined by the existence of the latter, because knowing is a social process which, like all social processes, is not determined by

mological ones. But one must differentiate the final, quite often idealist conclusions and points of departure of scepticism (and agnosticism), and likewise its constant wavering between materialism and idealism, because all this constitutes the essential content of this doctrine.

The mistaken preposition cited above was published in 1953, but was not criticised in subsequent years, and, moreover, it was repeated almost word for word in 1960 in another popular publication, *A Reader in Marxist Philosophy* (edited by M.M. Rosenthal) in which it was said:

> Denial of the knowability of the world is characteristic of idealist philosophy. True, there are also idealists who do not deny man's capability of cognising the real properties of things, but they, too, claim that he does not know nature and matter, but some mysterious, invisible spirit that created nature and constitutes the basis of all things (227:202).

It is quite incomprehensible why even those idealists who, in the words cited, 'do not deny man's capability of cognising the real properties of things' all the same claim that he does not know either nature or matter. But the idealist proposition about the secondariness of nature and matter, which represent only the external envelope of the soul, is evidence that idealism considers the essence of the material and natural to be wholly knowable.

Recognition of the knowability or the unknowability in principle of the world thus does not in itself constitute grounds for singling out the *main* trends in philosophy. But it should not be concluded, however, that there is no epistemological antithesis between materialism and idealism. Such a conclusion seems to me to be superficial. There is a radical antithesis between the materialist and idealist understandings of the knowability of the world.

An error of epistemological idealism (from Machism and neorealism to ordinary language philosophy) is a dogmatic conviction that there is a purely epistemological solution of philosophical problems that excludes any 'metaphysics', i.e. any ontological premisses. In fact, any epistemological posing of a philosophical problem implicitly includes ontological premisses, and above all a definite understanding of the 'spiritual-material' relation. The expression 'epistemological idealism' is therefore largely arbitrary; it is a matter of a version of idealist philosophy that poses and tries to answer only theoretical, cognitive problems, from which it does not follow, however, that it succeeds in eliminating 'metaphysics'.

Thus I hold, in spite of epistemological idealism, that

form, is a reflection of reality independent of the latter. This consistently materialist understanding of the nature of mind is a very important epistemological principle of materialism, systematically substantiated by Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

The epistemological concept of reflection indicates that the content of consciousness (and of knowledge) is not generated by mind itself but is drawn from what is realised and cognised and forms the object of inquiry. Even when the object of cognition is knowledge itself, the concept of reflection retains its sense, since knowledge as the object of inquiry exists independently of the investigation. The fact that the object is a reflection of the external world alters nothing in principle, because the reflection of the external world in mind is a process governed by objective laws.

One must stress, furthermore, that understanding of mind (consciousness) as a reflection of objective reality characterises its *form* as well as its content. Were there no sun there would also be no vision, this specific form of reflection of objective reality. Logical forms, as Lenin stressed, reflect the most general relations of things, established every day in experience. This feature of logical forms is also revealed by contemporary mathematical logic, since it treats them as relations between the signs by which objects are thought about.

Cognition, knowing, is a *specific* form of reflection, because not all of a living creature's (including man's) reflection of the external world is knowledge. Man reflected quantum mechanical processes even when he did not have the slightest notion of them. Animals obviously also reflect the diversity of the laws of nature in their activity insofar as they adapt spontaneously to them. But there can be nothing here, of course, to do with cognition. Knowing does not embrace all the reflective activity peculiar to the animate.

More than 70 years ago Lenin expressed the following hypothesis in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*: 'it is logical to assert that all matter possesses a property which is essentially akin to sensation, the property of reflection' (142:78). The latest research in the field of cybernetics, and in particular the concept of information as an objective process, indicates the legitimacy of the ontological interpretation of reflection as an attribute of certain forms of the interaction of material phenomena. From that angle reflection as a cognitive process is the highest level of development of

stopping of the ears and a closing of the eyes; only by tearing loose from nature, did the soul get back to itself from the world of alienated existence. And then it was faced not with things, but with ideas of things, the transcendent primary essences that it had contemplated before its fall, i.e. its incarnation in the human body. Plato attributed a mystical sense to the ordinary notion (everyone knows what it means to remember); during remembrance the soul mentally returned to its transcendent primary source.

The antithesis between Plato and Demokritos brings out the main epistemological alternative particularly sharply. What forms the *source* of our knowledge? Nature or the supernatural? Matter or spirit?

Lenin, when criticising 'physical' idealism, which argued that the change in the scientific understanding of physical reality overthrew the materialist outlook on the world, made it clear that the development of scientific notions about matter had 'no relation to the epistemological distinction between materialism and idealism' (142:240), since this distinction was not linked with any understanding of the structure and forms of existence of matter, elementary particles, etc. The epistemological antithesis of the main philosophical trends is determined by differences in understanding the source of knowledge.

> Materialism and idealism [he wrote] differ in their answers to the question of the *source* of our knowledge and of the relation of knowledge (and of the 'mental' in general) to the *physical* world (*ibid*).

Materialism regards cognition as a specific reflection of the material world. The idealist denial of the material world is a denial of the real epistemological function of reflection, which means that the idealist can employ the concept of reflection only by mystifying its real content as a cognitive process, which was already to be found in Plato.

In the idealist philosophy of modern times the concept of reflection has been employed by Leibniz, Hume, Hegel, and other philosophers. In Hegel it (reflexion) serves to describe such relations as 'essence-being', and 'appearance-phenomenon'. He endeavoured to demonstrate that the antitheses inherent within objective reality were reflectively related and reflected each other. Essence, for example, is sublated being, which is retained in it as appearance or 'reflected being' (see 86:162, and 89:15-22). Consequently

> *reflection*, or light thrown into itself, constitutes the distinction between Essence and immediate Being, and is the peculiar characteristic of Essence itself (86:162).

are not quite the same thing. One cannot agree with Horn, a Marxist from the GDR, who treated the term 'knowledge' and 'reflection' as essentially synonymous. Such a point of view is acceptable for a materialist, but should not be ascribed to idealists. But Horn wrote:

> In the whole theory of knowledge the concept of reflection has a central place. It always used to be falsely attributed only to materialism; in reality it also underlies idealism, though often under another name (104:61).

Horn tried to show that the problem of reflection was of such a fundamental character that no idealist doctrine could avoid it. That is correct, of course, but it does not follow from it at all that idealists agree with the epistemological principle of reflection. Idealism interprets the process of knowing as an autonomous activity independent of material reality. Some idealists describe cognition as a logical process of the self-movement of pure thought, independent of sense perceptions. Others consider it supersensory vision, a mystical dawning on one, and an intuitive merging with the world. Still others, being inclined toward idealist empiricism, see in cognitive activity an ordering of sense data, the establishing of connections between them, and the constructing of things from the material of sensations. The different interpretations often overlap, a denial of knowing as reflection of a world independent of it, moreover remaining inevitable for them. That, as Lenin stressed, determines the epistemological antithesis between materialism and idealism:

> The fundamental distinction between the materialist and the adherent of idealist philosophy consists in the fact that the materialist regards sensation, perception, idea, and the mind of man generally, as an image of objective reality (142:248).

The materialist considers the sensually perceived world to be real irrespective of its being known by the existing world. That is one of the most important features of the principle of reflection, which presupposes reliance on the evidence of the sense organs. The objective necessity, justification, and legitimacy of this confidence is founded on practice, since it is by sense perceptions that man orientates himself in the material world around him, adapts himself to it, and alters it.

Idealism scorns this allegedly uncritical confidence in the evidence of the sense organs, in spite of the fact that materialist epistemology has always been concerned with a critical analysis of the content of sensory reflection, and the philosophy of Marxism disclosed the dialectical contradiction

> a colour, or figure, can be like nothing but another colour or figure. If we look but never so little into our thoughts, we shall find it impossible for us to conceive a likeness except only between our ideas. Again I ask whether those suppos'd originals or external things, of which our ideas are the picture or representations, be themselves perceivable or no? If they are, then they are ideas and we have gained our point; but if you say they are not, I appeal to any one whether it be sense, to assert a colour is like something which is invisible; hard or soft, like something which is intangible and so of the rest (15:31).

Berkeley claimed that the concept of reflection lacked sense. Contemporary idealist empiricism has not added anything essentially new to this argument. Berkeley counterposed idealism directly to materialism (he called the former immaterialism), while the latest positivism, in rejecting the epistemological principle of reflection, quite often is not aware of the idealist character of this stance. Contemporary positivists in fact resort in essence to the Berkeleian arguments: acknowledgement of external objects independent of sensuality (and reflected by it) is unprovable in principle. Berkeley was more consistent, declaring the assumption of the existence of sensual objects 'in themselves' to be absurd, since sense data consisted of sensations only.

Berkeley's main argument deserves special attention, viz., that ideas (as he called both sensations and sense perceptions) cannot be like things precisely because they are ideas and not things. That consideration served him not in order to counterpose sensations and things, but in order to conclude that sensations were the sole reality directly accessible to us. Sensations, according to him, are not evidence of the existence of things; they were things. Therefore any attempt to draw some kind of distinction between sensations and things and divide them from one another was fruitless, scholastic philosophising. We had no right to assert that there was something distinct in things from what was in sensations, since this distinction did not exist in sensations. But if everything that was in things was also in sensations, what basis was there for thinking that something existed distinct from sensations? Such is the logic of subjective-idealist epistemology.

There have never been materialists, of course, who would have claimed that sensations as such, i.e. as psychic phenomena, were like things. The principle of reflection registers the difference between the subjective image and the object, pointing at the same time to the *content* of the image, drawn from outside, from the object that is somehow reproduced in this image. Materialism does not ascribe any physical, chemi-

abstracted so as to understand the object precisely as it exists independent of the subject, but also that which is revealed in the inclination itself of cognition, in the methods of inquiry employed by the cognising subject, in the mode of 'coding' the reflected content, the varied forms of which are historically developed and consciously perfected during the development of knowledge. The objective is not only what exists outside of and independent of consciousness; that, of course, is its main definition, but one must not forget about the epistemologically objective and the logically objective. Truth is objective although it is a phenomenon of the process of cognition. The laws (rules) of logical thought are also objective, but they do not exist outside thought.

Berkeley identified objects with sensations, and that was the ineradicable fault of his essentially solipsistic theory. Subsequent idealism, unlike Berkeleianism, began to treat objects and sense perceptions as similar but not mutually identical phenomena of the mind. Hume had already put *impressions* (perceptions) in the place of objects, and treated ideas (notions, concepts) as *images* of impressions. This theory, however, was an illusory conception of reflection, since ideas, according to him, differed from impressions like remembrances from direct experiences, i.e. were less lively, direct, and vivid.

> Those perceptions [Hume wrote], which enter with most force and violence, we may name *impressions*; and under this name I comprehend all our sensations, passions and emotions, as they make their first appearance in the soul. By *ideas* I mean the faint images of these in thinking reasoning (106:I, 11).

This subjective-psychological demarcation of impressions and their 'images' has nothing in common with the epistemological principle of reflection, which starts from recognition of a material reality independent of cognition.

Hume's amending of Berkeley's epistemological subjectivism thus boils down to claiming that things were identified with sensations only because they functioned as things for us. The question of what things were in themselves lacked sense because we only knew what sensations witnessed to about them. This tendency, barely emerging in Hume's philosophy, got systematic development in Kant's doctrine of the 'thing-in-itself'. Neokantianism, which has discarded this important element of Kant's doctrine, however, retained the agnostic interpretation of sense data as a specific mode of denying the epistemological principle of reflection. This line was most consistently followed by Cassirer in his *Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff*, in

the epistemological principle of reflection, simplified its real content to the extreme and so distorted it. 'The mind is not a mirror nor a picture gallery.... The content of the mind does not need to resemble the objects for which it stands' (215:193). But even pre-Marxian materialism did not treat reflection at all as Pratt pictured it. The comparison with a mirror, if it was ever made, was no more than an analogy, of course, and such an analogy has perhaps not lost sense even in our time.

Ordinary usage connected the word 'reflection' with the notion of passive perception of external objects. When science borrows some of its terms from ordinary language, it gives them a new content, sense, and meaning. The critique of scientific terminology that starts from the meaning of terms in their ordinary usage is mistaken. Idealism makes precisely that kind of mistake in its critique of the materialist concept of reflection. The root of the error is the idealist understanding of the process of knowing by which the world is cognised only insofar as it has a mental character, i.e. coincides, if not directly then ultimately, with human mentation. If the world were material it would be unknowable—such is the logic of the idealist. The mystic doctrine of the merging of man and God is an extreme expression of this idealist idea.

One must note in passing that contemporary idealist doctrines usually avoid a direct identification of the knowability of the world with mentation.[18] The dominant idealist conception in contemporary bourgeois philosophy of an initially alienated relations between the knowing subject and the surrounding reality is frequently expressed in assertions about the 'mindlessness' or 'spiritlessness' of the world, from which it does not follow, however, that the world is material. This conception of a substantial alienation links up directly, in some cases with agnosticism, in others is compelled to seek new modes of idealist interpretation of the knowability of the world. In Heidegger's 'fundamental ontology', for instance, the possibility of knowing the world is substantiated by the 'openness' of human existence, i.e. its primordial unity with the being of what exists. The rationalist doctrine of *lumen naturale* (natural light of reason), according to Heidegger, is an oversimplified evocative notion of this prereflexive existence of the individual which precisely makes knowledge possible, though only to the extent that it retains this original 'tunability' of existence. It is not difficult to discover in these arguments of this venerable existentialist the Platonic conception of knowledge being preformed in the

> the two statements about knowledge (subjective creative activity and reflection) not only agree with one another, but even necessarily posit each other. Knowledge can only be active, practically directed reflection of objective reality. Subjective activity without reflection leads to an arbitrariness practically without results, rather than to creativity and the creation of things needed by man (122:23).

The antithesis between the materialist and idealist answers to the epistemological aspect of the basic philosophical question thus comes out with full obviousness in these incompatible interpretations of the principle of the knowability of the world.

4. The Epistemological Aspect. The Principle of the Knowability of the World and Philosophical Scepticism

Philosophy had in fact already proclaimed the principle of the knowability of the world at the dawn of its existence, since philosophers began with reflections about cosmos foreign to scepticism, leaving it to 'opinion', i.e. the ordinary mind, to decide what was directly accessible to sense perception. This position of the fathers of the materialist understanding of the world was soon, however, rejected by those philosophers, the predecessors of idealism, who first denounced the cosmological claims of Ionian natural philosophy to cognise the *universum*, and later began to argue about the illusoriness of any human knowledge, whatever objects it was related to.

The Eleatics claimed that the picture of the world based on sense contemplation completely deceived us; real existence could only be mentally comprehendable reality free of the qualities our senses endowed it with. Zeno of Elea logically tried to prove the validity of denying the sensuous picture of the world. His aporias were, as a matter of fact, the first school of philosophical scepticism. It was not without reason that sceptics were later called aporetics.

The Sophist Gorgias, who developed the dialectical mode of thought in the negative form that Zeno had given it, gave a proof of the following theses: (1) nothing exists; (2) if anything existed, it would be unknowable; (3) if anything were knowable it would be impossible to express knowledge of it. 'This is no idle talk, as was formerly supposed,' Hegel commented, 'for Gorgias' dialectic is of a quite objective kind, and is most interesting in content' (85:380).

So, already in the early stages of philosophy's existence, an antithesis arose between theories that substantiated the

Greek Scepticism was thus not just a philosophy, but also a psychology and a theory of education that reflected the progressing alienation of the individual in a society in which there was no class that could take on the initiative of radical social transformations. That was its social sense. But from the angle of the history of philosophy it is an incomparably more interesting phenomenon, since it was scepticism that systematically summed up the preceding development of philosophy, though in a negative form, disclosed its inherent contradictions, and put forward problems whose significance went far beyond the bounds of the historical epoch that gave rise to it. Disputes about first principles and elements, about the universal flux of things, or about immobile existence, the counterposing of what truly existed to what existed in opinions, the dividing of the world into a this-side realm of things and a transcendent realm of ideas, the dualism of matter and form—all that, according to the Sceptics' doctrine, proved that any philosophical statement could be countered by one that excluded it. No one, consequently, knew what things consisted of, whether of water or of fire, of homoeomeries or atoms or something else. The only correct stance in a philosophical dispute was therefore to abstain from judgments. That did not mean that no meaning should be attached to the evidence of the sense organs. On the contrary, only that evidence deserved attention; honey was sweet, and it was impossible not to acknowledge that perception as a fact. One should only not affirm that the sweetness was inherent in the honey in itself.

Greek Scepticism was primarily a denial of the possibility of reliable philosophical knowledge. One must not forget, of course, that any theoretical knowledge was in essence called philosophy in those days, and the Sceptics waged polemics against mathematics, too, trying to prove that truth was also unattainable in that field. Roman Scepticism, while directly associated with the Greek, took this whole tendency to the logical extreme. The teaching of Ainesidemos of Knossus and his successor Agrippa about tropes or modes boiled down to this that it primarily stressed the subjectivity of sense perceptions and in that regard anticipated the agnosticism of modern times. Roman Scepticism also campaigned against logical thinking, pointing out that inferences did not yield truths, because the premisses from which they were drawn could never be proved. So logic was employed to refute logic.

The Sceptic analysis of causality presents special interest. Ainesidemos, citing everyday experience, concluded that it was

> the scientists among the philosophers, their work is to compare, and consequently to assemble together the various assertions already available. They cast an equalising, levelling learned glance back on the systems and thereby brought out the contradictions and oppositions (174:504).

The main content of Greek Scepticism consisted, consequently, in a critique of the varied, mutually exclusive philosophical conceptions, to which, however, it counterposed ordinary notions, without insisting on their truth, but suggesting that they were more capable all the same of achieving ataraxia than all previous philosophy. Greek Scepticism was a self-criticism of philosophy at that stage of its development when it was almost wholly based on everyday experience alone and differed from ordinary consciousness in its theoretical interpretation, which was not, however, confirmed by experience.

The scepticism of the age of the forming of the capitalist system, while reviving the ideas of its Greek forerunners, already appeared in a new quality; it fought against clericalism, theology, and scholasticism, and also against those bourgeois rationalist doctrines that, for all their historical progressiveness, reconciled reason and faith. Christian phraseology, behind which (as Engels pointed out) 'the present-day philosophy has had to hide for some time' (53:422), often served this scepticism only as an ideological cover. While making use of this shield, scepticism defended toleration, and sometimes even came to a justification of religious indifferentism and atheism.

Pierre Bayle came forward in his *Historical and Critical Dictionary*, as a pious erudite who collated the views of philosophers and theologians, and set out the historical facts. His conclusions were far from categorical and were still quite unambiguous for anyone who could read between the lines. He believed that a logical substantiation of religious dogmas was impossible in principle and only discredited the lofty aim it pursued. The rationalist critique of religion, too, was unsound, because the latter did not become divine revelation in order to justify itself before limited human reason, which constantly came into conflict with itself when it tried, for example, to prove the reality of the sense-perceived world or to formulate criteria to demarcate truth from error. Philosophy did not frighten religion, because the latter was based on faith, which could not be demolished by logical arguments of any kind.

> Neither the dogmatics nor the sceptics will ever be capable of entering the kingdom of God, unless they become little children, unless they change maxims, unless they renounce their wisdom, and unless they make

> recognises the relativity of all our knowledge, not in the sense of denying objective truth, but in the sense that the limits of approximation of our knowledge to this truth are historically conditional (142:121).

The metaphysical systems of the seventeenth century interpreted their results dogmatically, and made absolutes of the truths that they had discovered in battle with scholasticism. Bayle's scepticism was thus not only directed against scholasticism and theology—the general opponent of the progressive philosophy of the seventeenth century—but also against those features of the metaphysical systems that had become fetters on their further progress in conditions of rapidly developing scientific knowledge. Marx and Engels wrote of Bayle:

> *Pierre Bayle* not only prepared the reception of materialism and of the philosophy of common sense in France by shattering metaphysics with his scepticism. He heralded the *atheistic society* which was soon to come into existence by *proving* that a society consisting only of atheists is *possible*, that an atheist *can* be a man worthy of respect, and that it is not by atheism but by superstition and idolatry that man debases himself (179:127).

A new historical form of scepticism, reflecting the conversion of the bourgeoisie into a conservative class, was the doctrine of David Hume. The Scottish philosopher considered himself an opponent of '*excessive* scepticism'; he tried to counterpose '*mitigated* scepticism' (105:111) to it, which in his opinion was a philosophy of common sense obliging man to observe reasonable caution in his assertions. But his belief in the moderateness of his scepticism was unfounded; he led the reader into error because he was himself mistaken. Scepticism had its objective logic that compelled it to pass from one negation to another, and which it was impossible to avoid. In proclaiming the goal of scepticism to be 'to destroy *reason*' (105:107), since inquiry had to refute all *outward* authority, Hume subjectively belittled the significance of theoretical thought. Both the metaphysicians of the seventeenth century, and Bayle, and Hume's contemporaries, the French Enlighteners, categorically opposed reason to faith. Hume revised this principle of all the progressive philosophy of the time and considered knowledge a special kind of belief, which he defined as 'merely a peculiar *feeling* or *sentiment* (106:II,313). The objective logic of scepticism is stronger than the desire to avoid its harmful conclusions and hopeless contradictions. On the one hand Hume asserted that reason, operating according to its general principles, i.e. by the requirements of logic, 'leaves not the lowest degree of evidence in any proposition, either in philosophy or common

a theoretical character. It was impossible to be consistent, rational, and logical in the sphere of theory. The theorist was therefore left simply to choose between conclusions that were useful and agreeable and others that did not lead to experiences of such a kind. And, anticipating pragmatism, Hume declared: that 'If I must be a fool, as all those who reason or believe anything *certainly* are, my follies shall at least be natural and agreeable' (106:I, 254-255). But did natural or agreeable folly exist, at least for the thinker? Hume spoke bitterly about the 'forelorn solitude, in which I am plac'd in my philosophy' (106:I, 249). We see, consequently, that the 'mitigated scepticism' was a theory that revealed and at the same time veiled the contradictions of scepticism.

Hume was the philosopher who expounded the doctrine of scepticism with the greatest fullness, thoroughness, and system; that is why its unsoundness is revealed with special clarity in his works, which, while insisting on refraining from philosophical judgments, adopted the pose of supreme arbiter in philosophy and, while rejecting dogmatism, at the same time converted his own theses into dogmas.

Hume, as we know, had a great influence on Kant, rousing him (to use Kant's expression) from dogmatic somnolence, i.e. from the 'pre-critical' views that he subsequently rejected. Kant regarded both dogmatism and scepticism as inevitable stages in the history of human reason. The sceptic was right in relation to the dogmatist, who was not aware of the necessity of a critical study of his fundamental propositions, and of the cognitive peculiarities of man in general. But scepticism claimed too much, while it was in fact

> a resting-place for reason, in which it may reflect on its dogmatical wanderings, and gain some knowledge of the region in which it happens to be, that it may pursue its way with greater certainty; but it cannot be its permanent dwelling-place. It must take up its abode only in the region of complete certitude, whether this relates to the cognition of objects themselves, or to the limits which bound all our cognition (116:434).

In spite of his doctrine of 'things-in-themselves' unknowable in principle, and the dependence of the world of phenomena on the structure of human cognitive abilities, Kant not only did not consider himself a sceptic, but suggested that only his doctrine finally overcame scepticism. That was no simple illusion. Kant really disagreed with Hume and his predecessors on a number of questions, although in the final count he continued the same line in philosophy.

ledge. Cognition of phenomena was not limited by any bounds, but progressing knowledge of the world of phenomena did not bring us a whit closer to the 'things-in-themselves', i.e. to objective reality, which was treated as above experience and transcendental.

Kant thus did not defeat scepticism. Like the sceptics he interpreted cognition subjectively and recognised something unknowable, this something, moreover, being not some infinitely remote residue left (as Herakleitos put it) at the bottom of a bottomless well, but everything that gave rise to sensations, i.e. objective reality. Kant's scepticism consisted in his mode of interpreting the fact of knowledge rather than in denying it. In order to understand this form of scepticism properly, which differs essentially from Hume's (not to mention earlier forms), it is important to stress that the unknowable 'thing-in-itself' was not the starting point of Kant's doctrine, but its end result. He created it not in order to prove the existence of an unknowable reality, but with the aim of substantiating the knowability of the world of phenomena in principle and the possibility of science as theoretical knowledge embracing universal and necessary judgments. But his anti-dialectical understanding of the universality and necessity of theoretical judgments as absolute universality and absolute necessity led to his opposing a priori principles to empirical data, to a dualism of phenomena and 'things-in-themselves', of the world of experience and the transcendental, and ultimately to a subjectivist, agnostic interpretation both of cognition and of knowable reality.

Considering the difference between Kant's doctrine and Humism and other varieties of scepticism, it is expedient to call it *agnosticism* rather than scepticism, although this term did not yet exist in his day. Scepticism and agnosticism are doctrines of the same type, of course, but the differences between them are substantial and the student of philosophy should not ignore them.

The agnostic, like the sceptic, denies the knowability of objective reality or even throws doubt on its very existence, but he does not deny either the possibility of theoretical knowledge or the attainability of truth, and accordingly does not stick to the principle of refraining from theoretical judgments. Agnosticism can be regarded as a form of scepticism that developed in the period when science had achieved social recognition, and its outstanding advances were making the old sceptical denial of the possibility of science simply impossible; despite the commonly held view, facts also play a significant role in philosophy.

knowledge, i.e. to indicate something in principle unknowable. 'The monistic philosophy,' he declared, 'is ultimately confronted with but one simple and comprehensive enigma—the "problem of substance" ' (82:12).

Engels called Huxley's agnosticism and that of related scientist-thinkers *shamefaced materialism* (52:347). That was a very apt definition that made it possible to distinguish the philosophically inconsistent materialism of scientists from Kantian agnosticism, which combined dualism with idealism and ultimately passed to the stance of the latter.

The 'shamefaced' materialist agnostic in essence acknowledged all the real concrete problems of science and philosophy to be solvable; what he called unsolvable enigmas were incorrectly formulated problems the anti-dialectical posing of which blocked the way to their solution.

The agnostic of the type of Huxley or Haeckel was an inconsistent materialist (usually of the metaphysical, mechanistic type), and opponent of the religious, idealist outlook on the world. But he dissociated himself from materialism, which had a bad reputation in bourgeois society. Haeckel, for example, called his outlook not materialist but monistic, and even preached a sort of 'monistic religion' that on closer examination proved to be polite atheism.

> Pure monism [he wrote] is identical neither with the theoretical materialism that denies the existence of spirit, and dissolves the world into a heap of dead atoms, nor with the theoretical spiritualism (lately entitled 'energetic' spiritualism by Ostwald) which rejects the notion of matter and considers the world to be a specially-arranged group of 'energies', or immaterial natural forces (82:16-17).

There is no need to prove that the position of Huxley and his associates in the latter half of the nineteenth century was historically progressive and as a matter of fact anti-religious. So it is understandable why the English writer G.K.Chesterton, an adherent of Thomism, ruefully wrote: 'Now so many bishops are agnostics' (35:432).[20]

Engels stressed that scientists' 'shamefaced materialism', though they called it agnosticism, differed essentially from the Kantian doctrine of 'things-in-themselves'. The latter, according to Kant, were outside time and space and could not be an object of cognition. But, as Engels pointed out 'scientists take care not to apply the phrase about the thing-in-itself no natural science, they permit themselves this only in passing into philosophy' (51:241). If a scientist applied the concept 'thing-in-itself' to phenomena constituting the object of his research, he would

postulates were recognition of the existence of God, retribution beyond the grave, and the independence of will of motives.

The contradictions in the treatment of the relation between moral and religious consciousness were organically linked with the duality characteristic of Kant in his understanding of 'things-in-themselves' and noumena. In the first edition of *Critique of Pure Reason* (we know), he defined a 'thing-in-itself simply as a limitation concept, so questioning its real existence, i.e. its independence of the process of cognition. In the second edition he attempted to eliminate that subjectivist accent. In the addition entitled 'Refutation of Idealism' (already mentioned above), he categorically declared that his doctrine ruled out any doubts of the existence of 'things-in-themselves'. But no declaration could eliminate the contradiction contained in the very concept of an absolutely unknowable essence, in relation to which it was considered established that it existed, affected our sensuality, etc. This contradiction of the agnostic interpretation of the traditional metaphysical problematic is particularly obvious in the chapter of *Critique of Pure Reason* entitled 'On the Ground of the Division of All Objects into Phenomena and Noumena' (116:180). In it Kant explained that the dividing line between phenomena and noumena had only a negative character because there could not be positive statements about the existence of what was not an object of experience. In stating that the sensually perceived are *only* phenomena, one thus (in his idea) counterposed it to what was not an object of experience, which meant that the fixing of boundaries of experience was at the same time a mental assumption of what existed outside experience. But why did these boundaries indicate the existence of the transcendent? The explanation was that the boundaries of sense contemplation (and of any possible experience in general) comprised space and time, and everything that existed outside space and time must be considered transcendent. But what did the conclusion about the existence of extraspatial and extratemporal essences follow from? From the fact, Kant suggested, that time and space were only forms of sense contemplation. Ultimately he admitted that the reality of the transcendent was unprovable:

> But, after all, the possibility of such noumena is quite incomprehensible.... The conception of a noumenon is therefore merely a *limitation conception*, and therefore only of negative use (116:188).

Understanding the absurdity of solipsism, Kant argued that consciousness of the subjectivity of the sensual was precisely an establishing of its boundaries, beyond which lay objective

reality independent of sensibility. This speculative argument was essentially the sole one possible from the angle of the Kantian pure, theoretical reason. The *Critique of Practical Reason* interpreted noumena as necessary conditions of the possibility of moral consciousness. If it was possible only because of the transphenomenal independence of will from sensual motives, did it not follow from this that pure good will was also a noumenon? And if the motives of moral actions were transcendent essences (substantial soul, God, etc.) did it not follow that they were not simply conceivable but actually existing realities? Otherwise, it turned out that the human individual was moral only because of error, i.e. because he or she believed that God and transcendent justice existed, though in fact neither the one nor the other did. But that assumption, too, left the main point unclear: how was free will, based only on a conviction that freedom really existed, possible? Kant argued that the human individual as a sensuous being (or phenomenon) was absolutely determined and consequently did not belong to itself, did not possess moral consciousness, was not, in essence, even an individual. It became an individual and bearer of moral consciousness only insofar as it was also a supersensuous being.

The *Critique of Pure Reason* insisted that the existence of noumena was essentially problematic. The *Critique of Practical Reason* ultimately converted these postulates into actual conditions of morality. The existence of pure morality, treated as fact (because Kant considered 'impure' morality as the most obvious negation of the fact of morality), was interpreted as *practical* proof of the substantiality of the soul, free will, etc. The exact establishing and description of a fact showed, according to his doctrine, the factual conditions of its possibility, i.e. other facts not amenable to observation that, however, *had* to exist because otherwise what was, i.e. the established described fact, was impossible.

The framing of the question that epistemological analysis of some facts argued the existence of others, to some extent foresaw the real significance of practice, in particular of theoretical analysis of its content, for proving those judgments of science that could not be obtained by logical deduction. But Kant had no understanding of practice as universal human activity; for him practical reason was only moral consciousness and behaviour corresponding to the strict requirements of the categorical imperative. It was a matter, furthermore, of the absolutely pure moral consciousness ascribed to the sensuous

human individual, although it was independent, according to the definition, of sensibility. Such consciousness did not, of course, exist (as Kant himself was to some extent aware), but the logic of his argument was as follows: to the extent to which there was pure moral consciousness, there were the transcendent, theological premisses of human morality. But the whole point was that all these premisses (or cogitated facts) could not *partly* exist precisely because they were cogitated not only as ideas but also as noumena.

Kant's philosophy was thus a negation of traditional metaphysical systems whose ideological downfall had been brought about by materialism's struggle against idealist speculation, by the outstanding advances of natural science, and by the development of bourgeois society. The reform of metaphysics undertaken by him started from awareness of these facts. The main problem he posed was how was science possible. Correspondingly, metaphysics, too, according to his doctrine, should become a science, since any other alternative was ruled out in principle. Kant developed metaphysics (1) as a doctrine of the forms of knowledge that transformed sense data into a system of science, and (2) as an epistemological study of the origin of the fundamental philosophical ideas that were not related to phenomena of the sense-perceived world. (3) He mapped out a new path of development of metaphysical ideology on the basis of a philosophical doctrine of practical reason, substantiating the primacy of the latter over theoretical reason. He developed that principle only in relation to ethics; even the question of the existence of 'things-in-themselves' as the source of sense data was not posed from the angle of practical reason, since moral necessity was not inherent in reality of that kind. Nevertheless Kant considered it absurd to deny the existence of 'things-in-themselves', i.e. recognised them, in contrast to noumena, as undoubtedly existent.

Kant understood metaphysics as a rationalist philosophical system, a system of pure reason. That was a one-sided view, not only because anti-metaphysical views had also developed on the soil of rationalism, and because certain opponents of rationalism had created idealist-empirical metaphysical systems. The limitedness of identifying metaphysics with rationalism consisted also in an incorrect radical antithesis of rationalism and empiricism, which in fact often supplemented each other, as it had been with Descartes and his opponent Hobbes, and just as it was with Kant himself. This identification, moreover, left out the irrationalist tendency of metaphysical philosophis-

ing, first brought out in the systems of Neoplatonism, and which have again become common, but now in the twentieth century, which Kant, of course, could not foresee.

Along with this one-sided understanding of speculative metaphysics in Kant there was also a very broadened interpretation of it, since only philosophical scepticism was declared its opposite. Kant's 'critical philosophy' claimed to overcome the extremes of metaphysical dogmatism and scepticism. Such a conception condemned all doctrines foreign to scepticism and criticism as dogmatic metaphysics. It ignored the idealist character of criticism and rejected materialism as 'uncritical' metaphysical philosophising. These contradictions in Kant's understanding of metaphysics were rooted in the contradictions of his own metaphysical system, in which he tried to join together scientific knowledge and superscientific assumptions, the principle of the knowability of the sense-perceived world and agnosticism, materialism and idealism, reason and faith. The failure of this attempt again brought to the fore the alternative—metaphysics or materialism?

I shall not go into the metaphysical systems of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, since it is sufficient, to answer the question of metaphysics' attitude to the antithesis between materialism and idealism, to stress that these thinkers developed new varieties of speculative metaphysics. To the metaphysics of immutable essences they counterposed a metaphysics of becoming, change, and development. This turn, which Kant clearly did not foresee, was largely the work of Hegel, who created a dialectical metaphysical system.[12]

What had been absolute opposites for Kant, i.e. subjective and objective, phenomenon and essence, knowledge and the 'thing-in-itself, freedom and necessity, this world and the transcendent one, in short everything that he and his predecessors had antidialectically opposed to one another, were treated by Hegel as a dialectical relation, a relation of opposites being converted into one another. There is no need specially to trace this dominant tendency of the Hegelian metaphysical system. Suffice it to point out that, according to Hegel, 'in cognition ... the contrast is virtually superseded, as regards both the one-sidedness of subjectivity and the one-sidedness of objectivity' (86:283). Reason, on the one hand, and the external world on the other, which had remained essences alien to each other in pre-Hegelian metaphysics, proved (according to him) to be two interpenetrating aspects of one whole that could be defined as subject-object, or thought-being. In that way the

world became rational and reason objective and secular.

German classical idealism was a very important epoch in the history of metaphysical systems. As Marx and Engels wrote:

> Seventeenth century *metaphysics,* driven from the field by the French Enlightenment, notably by *French materialism* of the eighteenth century, experienced a *victorious and substantial restoration* in *German philosophy*, particularly in the *speculative German philosophy* of the nineteenth century. After *Hegel* linked it in a masterly fashion with all subsequent metaphysics and with German idealism and founded a metaphysical universal kingdom, the attack on theology again corresponded, as in the eighteenth century, to an attack on *speculative metaphysics* and *metaphysics in general.* It will be defeated for ever by *materialism,* which has now been perfected by the work of *speculation* itself and coincides with *humanism* (179:125).

They noted in this connection the historical significance of Feuerbach's materialism, which 'counterposed *sober philosophy* to *wild speculation*' (*ibid.*). On the other hand they pointed out the development of communist theories that opened up a historical prospect of solution of radical social problems. These problems were unresolvable in principle in bourgeois society (which was presented by speculative philosophers as the sole possible form of civilisation). In that way Marxism disclosed the deep social roots not only of the theological but also of the philosophical conception of the transcendent, which thus functioned not simply as a misconception in the way of knowing but also as a specific form (of course illusory but fully fulfilling its ideological purpose) of resolving the antagonist contradictions of social development. In the light of the antithesis of communism (which Marx and Engels also called practical materialism) and idealism the whole preceding materialist critique of the metaphysical conception of transcendent reality, which seemed to rise above the empirical reality that oppressed human individual, proved one-sided, not affecting the social sense of freedom. Was that only a *theoretical* flaw or rather a consequence of the fact that the antithesis between materialism and idealist metaphysics developed in the context of one and the same bourgeois ideology?

'The standpoint of the old materialism,' Marx wrote, 'is civil society; the standpoint of the new is human society, or social humanity' (177:5). It is therefore not surprising that eighteenth-century materialism, irreconcilably hostile to theological and idealist speculations about a transcendent reality, proved quite incapable of disclosing the social roots of that speculation in the alienated social relations of an antagonistic society.

5. Toward a Critique of Irrationalist Speculative Metaphysics

Hegel's philosophy was the last great system of speculative metaphysics. Dialectically rethinking the traditional metaphysical problematic, he groped for a way out of the dead end of metaphysical system-making. But that way out was open only for those who rejected idealism together with the metaphysical mode of thinking. Hegel could not take that road. He limited himself to substantiating the thesis that the transcendent was immanent to empirical reality, thanks to which it was rational. His doctrine, however, as Lenin showed, implicitly included a conclusion that 'the struggle against existing wrong and prevalent evil, is also rooted in the universal law of eternal development' (141:21). That conclusion, however, could only be drawn by a revolutionary thinker. And only consistent revolutionaries, basing themselves on this conclusion, have been able to develop the dialectical-materialist system of views not only on nature but also on society. The bourgeois philosophy of the latter half of the nineteenth century naturally chose another road.

In Germany, after the 1848 Revolution, Engels wrote,

> the old fearless zeal for theory has now disappeared completely, along with classical philosophy. Inane eclecticism and an anxious concern for career and income, descending to the most vulgar job-hunting, occupy its place (52:375).

Things were roughly the same in the other developed capitalist countries of the time, as well. The positivist and Neokantian scholars who filled university chairs unanimously rejected metaphysical speculation, but what did they oppose to it? Indeterminate agnosticism which became the refuge of inconsistent subjective idealism. The latter came forward in the role of a scientific philosophy that boiled down to epistemology. Philosophy was expounded as a special scientific discipline, but in its Neokantian and positivist versions it was not such, of course, i.e. it remained a specific world outlook or ideology, rather emasculated, it is true, that it was discarded by all who really sought to answer ideological questions.

It seemed that philosophy, as the Neokantian Paulsen said of that time, no longer had a future. And only the fact that the universities still retained philosophy chairs inspired weak hopes. But the situation altered decisively at the end of the nineteenth century. The essence of the turn, in Paulsen's belief, was that the positive sciences, which had very nearly ousted philosophy,

> have not fulfilled all the expectations that were put in them a generation ago; they have led neither to a stabilised total view of things in themselves nor to a secure conception of life and standard of living (202:390).

Paulsen noted the revolution in physics which had begun at the end of the century, and the resulting methodological crisis:

> almost all the basic concepts that were so confidently operated with a generation ago as eternal truths, have recently been shaken ... even the law of conservation of energy is no longer safe from sceptical ideas and doubting inquiries (*ibid*.).[13]

The new discoveries in physics and other sciences had, in Paulsen's opinion, caused disappointment with science. That unexpected conclusion reflected the real facts, though in distorted form. The old anti-dialectical conceptions of truth and knowledge in general had collapsed. The oversimplified positivist conception that science did not deal with 'metaphysical' problems had suffered fiasco. Objective idealism, which seemed to be utterly defeated, stirred to life. Science, Paulsen wrote, reflecting this quickening interest for objective idealism and an idealist interpretation of ideological problems, had nowhere got to the root of matters, neither in the smallest nor in the biggest.

> One begins with the question: cannot and should not philosophy, so long despised and much abused, then in the end provide that without which, after all, the human spirit cannot manage for long, viz., an answer to the ultimate questions of reality and life, if not in the form of necessary propositions or eternal truths, as the old metaphysics believed, then at least in the shape of possible and believable opinions, in the shape of 'reasonable thoughts'? (202:391).

Paulsen explained the resurrection of speculative metaphysics idealistically. The nub of the matter was not the 'ideological anguish' about which Windelband spoke, so realising the inadequacy of Neokantian 'scientific idealism'. Bourgeois society, after the comparatively quiet, 'peaceful' period that set in after the 1848 revolutions, had again entered an age of revolutionary upheavals. Philosophical indifferentism in regard to social problems, which had performed its ideological function successfully in the lull, clearly did not correspond to the pre-imperialist and imperialist epochs. A 'revaluation of values', an apologia for tragic contradictions, and an irrationalist substantiation of imperialist policy had become necessary, since it could not be justified by rationalist philosophers and pacifists who clung to old liberal ideals. The irrationalist 'philosophy of life', especially in its Nietzschean version, proved the high road of development of imperialist ideology and the philosophy corresponding to it.

Nietzsche ridiculed the religious and idealist conceptions of a supernatural reality (sometimes even in the spirit of Feuerbach). He ridiculed them as hostile to life, because life as a whole is this-world and does not care for lifeless transcendency. He came close to an understanding of the social sense of the conception of transcendency, pointing out that it weakened the will to life.

> The concept of 'God' invented as a counterconcept of life—everything harmful, poisonous, slanderous, the whole hostility unto death against life synthesized in this concept in a gruesome unity! The concept of the 'beyond', the 'true world' invented in order to devaluate the only world there is—in order to retain no goal, no reason, no task for our earthly reality! (196:334).

Nietzsche, of course, remained a stranger to the materialist understanding of religion as a fantastic reflection of the dominance of elemental forces of social development over people. Even less was he able to understand the social function of religion as a weapon of spiritual enslavement of the exploited. Exploitation, oppression, the domination of some over others were the essence of life for him. He therefore criticised religion (in contrast to Feuerbach) for its overpowering of the naturally limitless will to life, whose incarnation, according to his doctrine, was whoever knew how to rule.

The condemnation of the religious 'curbing' of life grew with Nietzsche into a critique of the objective-idealist conception of metaphysical reality; he saw in that conception an illusion of the weak about the rational order prevailing in the world. Rationalist ideas of progress were rejected as an unforgivable neglect of the substantiality of life, the essence of which was formed not by reason but by will, not by thought but by instinct, feeling, and inclination. Nietzsche set upon the rationalist metaphysics of pure reason: 'The "pure spirit" is a pure stupidity; substract the nervous system and the senses, the 'mortal shell, *and we are left with*—nothing at all!' (194:179).

Nietzsche's expression may seem essentially materialist to the reader unversed in philosophy. Surely he was opposing sensuality and corporeality to the 'pure reason' of the rationalists? But the whole point is that Nietzsche spiritualised the body, considering it the incarnation of the immaterial will to power, i.e. of a primordial force that acquired its conscious expression in the human body. He followed the path laid by Schopenhauer's doctrine of the blind, anti-reason, indomitable will, which he transformed into a doctrine of life's primordial nature. Life did not reckon with any laws or confines; it strove

to destroy everything that impeded its elemental expansion.

From Nietzsche's point of view the will to power was not a scientifically established fact; he had a majestic disdain for facts of that kind. Life did not need recognition or justification. And the will to power was life itself, experience of life that adequately expressed its fullness and pressure. Even if the will to power was only a myth, life expressed itself in it. All the rest were ghosts, because the very existence of the world was 'only like an *aesthetic phenomenon*' (197:43). The world of appearance was the sole world, and life needed no other imaginary world whatsoever, for the comfort of the weak.

Nietzsche, who is often called the thinker who put an end to speculative metaphysics, in fact gave it a qualitatively new, irrationalist form, so breathing strength into it. Contemporary philosophical irrationalism, relying on Nietzsche, comes forward as a critic of the historically outlived rationalism of the seventeenth century, with its naive notion of the omnipotence of reason and its rigid hierarchy, absolutely excluding chance, of immutable laws that guaranteed harmony in every thing that exists. This critique of rationalist illusions is a form of manifestation of contemporary irrationalist metaphysics, since irrationalist philosophers objectively wage war not on the past but on contemporary science and materialist philosophy, which have long already overcome the errors of rationalism, retaining the kernel of truth it contained. That is obvious, in particular, from the example of existentialism, which expresses most vividly the transformation of metaphysics into an anti-scientific, irrationalist doctrine, in spite of its coming forward, in Heidegger's doctrine for example, as the negation of metaphysics.

Heidegger counterposed his 'fundamental ontology' to metaphysics, which he treated not only as a false way of thinking but also as a false mode of human existence created by the growing alienation of the human personality throughout civilisation, which was more and more losing its authenticity and its primaeval intuition of being initially inherent in it. But, didn't calling his philosophy ontology lead Heidegger into a contradiction with his intention to put an end to metaphysics (for ontology has always been the basis of metaphysics)? And in our time ontology (for example in Neothomist metaphysics) is a doctrine of being, above all of higher, mentally comprehensible being. But Heidegger broke with the traditional understanding of ontology, claiming that being could not be an object of cognition, and that an illusory notion of the knowability of being was engendered by the metaphysical exclusion

of man from being and by the rationalist counterposing of consciousness to being, as a consequence of which mind was interpreted as something distinct from being.

Heidegger took up arms against the materialist (and not just the materialist) recognition of an *external* world, interpreting this epistemological premiss as an impoverishment of human self, a conversion of being into something external, reduction of the human personality to a 'thinking thing', i.e. to an object that supposedly lends itself to cognition like other things. Ontology in Heidegger's sense was called upon to concern itself with investigating the structure of the question of the sense of being. It thus appealed to man, to the real man who inquires about the sense of being. In other words ontology was possible only as phenomenology in Husserl's sense, i.e. exploration of the special phenomena of human consciousness that have the sense of being. From that angle ontology was an anti-metaphysical doctrine, whose subject-matter was not being in general but human existence.

Existentialist ontology appraises the demarcation of consciousness and being, subject and object, as neglect of being. Such demarcation (the basis of which is formed by a life situation of alienation and not by mental acts) results in being functioning as the opposite of consciousness. But real being, lost by humanity and philosophy, does not break down into these opposites, since it is no more outside consciousness than consciousness is outside being. The dualism of being and consciousness is caused not simply by metaphysics but by the development of culture, by scientific and technical progress, by the loss of man's initial intimate link with being. The place of real being is therefore taken by the material world, the existent, which is taken, however, for being. Because of its alienation consciousness everywhere encounters only the existent, nowhere discovering being, although the latter does not hide from man but on the contrary is open to open human existence, because it differs from any existent, which has to be discovered. Metaphysics, Heidegger wrote, 'thinks of the existent as the existent. Everywhere where it is asked what the existent is, the existent as such is in sight' (94:7). But the observation of the existent is taken as the observation of being. Whatever is represented as existent—whether the soul in the sense of spiritualism or matter or strength in the sense of materialism, becoming and life as representation or will, substance, subject, energy, eternal return, etc., all that is only the existent. But it seems being, the luminescence of being,

because, as a consequence of the dualism of consciousness and being, the alienated consciousness is engrossed in the existent, contemplates and cognises the existent.

> Because metaphysics questions the existent as the existent, it remains with the existent and does not turn to being as being.... Insofar as metaphysics always imagines only the existent as existent, it does not think of being itself (94:8).

The existent is everything definite, material that is perceived, cognised, and utilised. But metaphysics does not understand that all that is not being.

At the same time, in spite of Heidegger, the creators of the metaphysical systems of the past did not identify the existent with being. True, beginning with Aristotle, they considered the existent as such the subject-matter of their inquiries, i.e. irrespective of the diversity of its versions or of individual sense-perceived things. Speculative metaphysics also endeavoured to comprehend the 'being of the existent' that Heidegger constantly talked about as what was beyond the sense-perceived world. Heidegger, of course, was well aware that there was also the demarcation he attached fundamental importance to (the existent and its being) in metaphysics. He therefore declared: everything that metaphysicians considered supersensory, extrasensory, transcendent, was not being, but only everything that is. Metaphysicians were mistaken here too in that they again took the existent for being whatever they had in mind, whether the world as a whole, single substance, *materia prima*, etc. This confusing of the existent with being, as Heidegger stressed, 'is certainly to be thought a consequence (*Ereignis*), not a mistake' (94:11). What is it a consequence of? Of the fact that man does not simply live in the world of the existent (it is inevitable) but, so to say, is at home in it, is absorbed by it, dreads his own authenticity and turns away in dread from it, i.e. from the existence of the existent ('what there is'). But what is this existence of 'what there is' that has been lost by humanity like the mythical golden age or the Biblical paradise? How is the bulk of 'what there is' to be penetrated in order to reach being? The answers boil down to the demand, addressed to the human personality that has lost its Ego: turn your gaze from the materiality that has depersonalised you, return to yourself, reach for the existence that is 'a mode of being, and actually the being of that "what there is" (existent), which often stands for the openness of being' (94:15). Being in existence is a permanent process of returning to one's self from the world, which cannot be left while your existence is main-

tained. It is also a permanent returning to the world from existence. Nevertheless, that is not a vicious circle from which there is no way out, since the task consists primarily in entering it. 'Existing' is pure subjectivity and at the same time 'transcending', or continuous emergence beyond the limits of one's Ego. But the main point in this real existence is its temporary character, that nothing any longer prevents constant awareness of. Existence is therefore 'being to death', permanent dread of the last possibility, the possibility of not being. It is not vulgar dread, however, which is always imposed from outside, from a chance encounter and haphazard experience; it is, so to say, original consciousness of the pricelessness of one's personality. This dread is a priori emancipation from the external and impersonal prevailing in the world of what is, and is the answer to the question—about the sense of the question of the sense of being.

As for being as such, it is indefinable, incomprehensible. Any definition posits the materiality of the defined. One can say of being only that it is. Being is being. The word 'is' here explains nothing. It cannot be an element of a definition of the concept of being since the concept was formed as a consequence of making a substantive of the verb 'to be'.

The demarcation of being and existence stressed human subjectivity, but said nothing about being, apart from its not being existence.

> The existent, which is the mode of existence, is man. Man alone exists. The rock is, but it does not exist. The tree is, but it does not exist. The horse is but it does not exist. The angel is but it does not exist. God is, but He does not exist (*ibid.*).

That proposition of Heidegger's, explaining the difference between existing and being, does not clarify the question of being. And philosophy, according to him, should go no further. It cannot say what being is, but can explain what it is not. Like a negative theology it discards all the attributes ascribed to God, limiting itself to the statement that He is not what is ascribed to Him, and consequently He exists. And that statement, after each rejection of what is taken as found and known, is filled with ever deeper sense, though nothing has been added to its content.

Metaphysics has at all times more or less denied or depreciated real knowledge, empirical in its origin, which it has depicted now as illusory, now as finite, superficial, etc. But while rationalist metaphysics counterposed abstractions of an orderly reality, a world of universal laws, world harmony, etc. to the mosaic

of sense perceptions, Heidegger's irrationalist metaphysics treated being as the negation of any pattern, insofar as the sciences recognise and cognise patterns of the existent. But everything that the sciences cognise, Heidegger averred, is only 'what there is', and to consider it being meant to repeat the mistake of metaphysics again and again. Being could be understood only as negation of the existent, which is present for man only as what can be cognised, measured, subordinated to himself, and used to attain practical ends. But being as the negation of any comprehensible definiteness is *irrational.* Heidegger's departure from classical metaphysics consisted not in his denying the existence of metaphysical reality; he denied only the metaphysical reality that rationalist metaphysicians recognised. The supersensory reality that he recognised could not be defined positively but its negative definition obviously meant for him mythological chaos, a flux lacking direction, an eternal menace, and the last judgment.

The irrationalist conception of metaphysical reality is a way of interpreting reality (both natural and social) that cannot be interpreted scientifically in terms of rationalism or irrationalism, in spite of the notions of speculative metaphysics in general. It is man who changes, transforms the world around him and makes it, in accordance with his knowledge and ability and within the framework of the objective conditions, independent of him, if not rational, at least more comfortable for living, or perhaps more interesting and inviting. But all that is only what is, the irrationalist metaphysician objects, resembling a religious preacher explaining to his flock that this world is unreal, not authentic, in brief, is not what it is. There is little wonder that the main expression of the alienation and self-alienation of the human personality, for Heidegger, was not man's enslavement by elemental forces of social development, but man's domination over nature, which (from his point of view) had nothing in common with the transformation of elemental natural forces into consciously and purposefully operating social ones. Heidegger condemned scientific and technical progress not just because he saw its negative aspects. He was horrified precisely by progress rather than by its secondary effects. Mastery of the elemental forces of nature represented for him a danger (and, moreover, not even to life but to its sense of being) of a kind by comparison with which the atom bomb was a mere trifle. 'The atom bomb, much discussed as the special death-machine, is not the fatal one,' he wrote. The most terrible thing was man's belief that he

> can make human existence tolerable and on the whole happy for everyone through peaceful release, transformation, storing up, and control of the energies of nature (91:271).

Heidegger's conception of irrational being is a philosophy of social pessimism in the spirit of Schopenhauer, who together with Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, was the forerunner of existentialist metaphysics. It was from a stance of social pessimism that Heidegger opposed rationalist metaphysics, one of whose main trends he considered to be materialism; and that not at all because materialism recognises some 'first principle' or, as some of its opponents claim, idolises matter. The metaphysical sin of materialism, from his point of view, is primarily its regarding nature as being, explaining nature from itself, i.e. considering 'what there is' as the cause of itself, ignoring the unknowable but omnipresent existence of 'what is'. And Heidegger, as not so often happens in contemporary bourgeois philosophy, directly opposed idealism to materialism, i.e. the doctrine that rejects explanation of the existent by the existent:

> If the title 'idealism' means as much as an understanding that being is never explicable through the existent, but is already 'transcendental' for any existent, then idealism is the sole, correct possibility of the philosophical problematic (93:208).

He ignored the point that idealism, which explains the existent from being, understands the latter as something spiritual. But the spiritual, according to existentialism, must be related to the existent as being present in experience.

Heidegger saw the nomination of man to purposively transform being as the second metaphysical sin of materialism.

> It is certainly also necessary, moreover, that we rid ourselves of naive notions about materialism and the cheap refutations of it we meet. The essence of materialism does not consist in the assertion that all is matter, but rather in a metaphysical notion according to which everything existent appears as the material of labour. The modern metaphysical essence of labour was in Hegel's aforementioned *Phenomenology of Spirit* as the self-organised process of unconditional production, which is a concretising of the real through man understood as subjectivity. The essence of materialism is given in the essence of technique, about which much has been written, to be sure, but little thought (92:87-88).

Heidegger undoubtedly displayed a deeper understanding of the essence of materialism than many contemporary bourgeois philosophers. He was aware that it does not deny the existence of the spiritual, and correctly pointed out its close connection with social, primarily production, practice. The materiality of nature, the existence of an external world, and its reflection in people's consciousness were demonstrated in practice. But

he did not want to accept these basic propositions of materialism, and could not. His whole 'anti-metaphysical' ontology was directed against materialism, especially against Marxist materialism, whose superiority over all other philosophical doctrines he recognised. And his polemic against rationalist metaphysics, depicted as a struggle against any metaphysics whatsoever, was only an attempt to create an idealist ideology that would make possible, as he put it, a 'fruitful conversation with Marxism', i.e. struggle against it.

So Heidegger's 'fundamental ontology' was a revival of metaphysics, but in a new form corresponding to contemporary conditions. In his last works he brought the concept of being, indeterminate in principle, closer and closer to the traditional metaphysical representation of God. His attitude to speculative metaphysics also altered:

> A thinking that thinks about the truth of being is no longer satisfied, to be sure, with metaphysics; but it also does not think contrary to metaphysics.
>
> Metaphysics remains the first in philosophy. It does not attain primacy in thought. Metaphysics is overcome in thinking on the truth of being... Nevertheless this 'overcoming of metaphysics' does not abolish metaphysics. For as long as man remains a rational animal (*animal rationale*) he is a metaphysical one (*animal metaphysicum*). As long as man understands himself as the reasoning creature, metaphysics appertains (in Kant's words) to his nature (94:9).

That half-recognition of metaphysics as the first in philosophy did not, of course, prevent Heidegger from depicting his ontology as a fundamental overcoming of metaphysics, the more so that the definition of man as a rational creature was interpreted as the consequence of alienation of human essence. In fact, he put meta-meta-physics in place of meta-physics. In our day of the very wide spread of metatheories of every kind, this effort seems very promising to many bourgeois philosophers. But it is to be expected that, having mastered the logic of Heidegger's arguments, there would appear some among his present supporters, who would try to create a meta-fundamental ontology.

Whereas metaphysics is revealed in Heidegger only as the hidden essence of 'fundamental ontology', differing from the subjective frame of mind, other spokesmen of existentialism comprehend their critique of rationalism as an attempt to transform speculative metaphysics.

Jaspers, who usually stressed his ideological kinship with Kant, considered the striving to convert metaphysics into a science the fatal error of the latter and other philosophers.

Kant had claimed that only by creating a philosophical science could the real need for philosophy (in contrast to the *philosophising* that anyone who felt like it engaged in) be substantiated. Jaspers took a different stance; only philosophising, i.e. meditation, guided by subjective needs and not the requirements of science, was possible and, moreover, necessary. The endeavour to put an end to philosophising through the development of a coherent, consistent, demonstrative system of views of intersubjective significance meant a return (from Jaspers' point, of view) to dogmatism, and denial of the true sense of philosophy.[14]

Jaspers was right in saying that a scientific metaphysics was impossible. He was also right in recognising that metaphysics constantly suffered fiasco in its efforts to overstep the bounds of possible experience. But his conclusion from that was unsound. He proposed not to reject metaphysics and its superscientific claims, but to agree that it was not knowledge but *belief* and only differed from religion in being the *faith of reason,* while religion could be defined as *metaphysics for the people*. It could not be put more clearly.

The third volume of Jaspers' *Philosophy* is called 'Metaphysics'. It opens with the following declaration: 'What is being, is the eternal question in philosophising' (114:III,1). That correct statement was interpreted, however, in the sense that only definite being was cognisable, as if there were a being that lacked definiteness. The cognition of definite being, incidentally, was also reduced to discovery of the unknowable in it. But what was that? Once again being, but being as *transcendency*. There were thus existence and transcendency, and between them an ephemeral world of knowable phenomena that were nothing other than a code to be deciphered, of course, by other than scientific means. 'The modes of this hunt for being from possible existence are *ways* to transcendency. To be *illumined* with it, is philosophical *metaphysics*' (114:III,3). Metaphysics, in Jaspers' understanding of it (in contrast to how the classics of rationalism understood it), was opposed to science as a real approximation to genuine metaphysical reality. In that understanding of it existentialist philosophy in essence made common cause with frankly religious Neothomist philosophising, which proclaimed through the mouth of Maritain: 'The inner being of things, situated outside of science's own sphere, remains for science a great and fertile unknown' (164:7).

In his popular works Jaspers said directly: transcendency

is God. In his main work he said that the divine was transcendent, so assuming that it included something else as well, possibly even non-divinity. Marcel expressed his attitude to religion more directly. Characterising his philosophy as metaphysics free of dogmatic systematism, he argued that the central metaphysical problem, that of the existence of the human Ego, was at the same time the problem of God. Not only did man exist thanks to God, but God, too, existed through and in man. This new, theological-existentialist version of 'principal co-ordination' was formulated as follows: 'It must then be possible, without attributing to the absolute *Thou* (my italics—*T.O.*) an objectivity that would destroy its very essence, to save its existence' (161:304). This conception of the immanence of transcendent human existence created a bond between existentialism and Christian spiritualism.

So the metaphysical philosopher is illumined by the transcendent. Jaspers clearly fought dogmatism in a mediaeval way, by means of mysticism, which cannot be a revolutionary opposition in our day as regards the religious ideology dominant in bourgeois society.

'Existentialist philosophy,' Jaspers declared, 'is essentially metaphysics. It believes what it springs from' (114:I,27). For all his agnosticism, he seemingly believed that he knew for certain what source existentialist metaphysics stemmed from; it believed in the transcendence that illumined it. Faith in the transcendent existed, of course, as a fact of consciousness. But this faith, like existentialist metaphysics as a whole, was rooted in the historical situation of this world and not in a mythical transcendence.

The metaphysics of existentialism is a striking expression of the hopeless crisis of metaphysical philosophising.

6. The Dispute between Materialism and Idealism and Differences in Understanding Speculative Metaphysics

If we exclude Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, and certain other philosophers and natural philosophers from the history of speculative metaphysics, in particular those who came close to materialism or even shared materialist views, then there are no special difficulties in defining metaphysics. But such a limiting of the concept would so distort its real development and all its inherent contradictions, crises, transitions, negations,

and intermediate and contemporary results, that inquiry into this very meaningful phenomenon of the alienated form of cognition is largely to lose its sense. Speculative metaphysics, as I have tried to show, is a system of objective idealist views that, while substantiating the existence of supersensory reality, at the same time generates its negation. That is because speculative metaphysics, however remote it is from science, is concerned with knowledge and not simply with mystification of reality.

I have already referred to Engels' appraisal of Thomas Münzer's religious outlook as approaching atheism. It would seem there could be nothing more impossible than to combine religion and its negation, yet it is a fact and not, moreover, the sole case. The Middle Ages and the Renaissance knew quite a few of these religious thinkers who lapsed into atheistic 'mistakes', and mystics who were not conscious that they were inclining toward materialism. Views of that kind must not be regarded as eclecticism (a very gross methodological mistake!) but as a peculiar expression of the crisis of the religious mind. Hence the glaring contradiction between the thinker's subjective religiosity and the objective, sometimes even anti-religious content of his doctrine. Something similar happened, too, in speculative metaphysics. It took shape as a secularisation of the religious outlook that opened the road to scientific investigation, which also developed to some extent within speculative metaphysics, altering its content.

Metaphysics could not avoid naturalistic tendencies, since it broke with religion (if only in form) and assimilated the results of scientific development. But these tendencies were negations of its basic spiritualist trend. And dualism, and sometimes even materialism, proved an inevitable consequence of this, sinful link (for metaphysics) with empirical reality. But this metaphysical leaning toward the real and earthly contradicted the spiritualist fervour of metaphysics, which usually 'overcame' the split in its own camp by dissociating itself from the dualist and materialist heresy, and again reviving as a doctrine of a special reality allegedly quite the opposite of the reality we cogitate but nevertheless forming its substantial basis.

Thus, although metaphysics is the negation, in both the epistemological and ontological respects, of the substantiality of the reality that humanity knows and transforms, this negation is naturally not based on inquiry into the transcendent (which cannot be an object of cognition simply because it does not exist). Metaphysics consequently studies the world that it denies. Is it surprising that negation of the 'beyond' reality,

and not of this one, often proves a consequence of this contradiction?

Just as periodical crises of overproduction are a mode of restoring the 'normal' proportion between demand and supply in bourgeois society, crises in the history of speculative metaphysics are specific forms of its development through which idealist conceptions of metaphysical reality become more 'realistic', assimilating the arguments of its opponents, scientific advances, and everyday experience (to the extent, of course, that this is possible for idealism). So neorealistic conceptions of ontology arise that admit the existence of qualitatively different fundamental realities, viz., material, spiritual, subjective, and logical, denying the necessity of the basic philosophical question and the alternative it contains on the grounds that there is no problem of genesis for the fundamental reality.

So dualism and materialism are far from chance phenomena in the history of speculative metaphysics, i.e. in the essence of idealist philosophy. These phenomena, which can be called paradoxes of metaphysics, express in an essential way the inevitability of the decomposition of each of its historical forms. Dualism, for example, generally does not exist outside metaphysics; it is the expression of the contradictions tearing metaphysics apart. One cannot, of course, say that of materialism, whose essence is adequately expressed in its opposition to speculative metaphysics, but one must note that the materialism, that grew on the soil provided by the decay of a certain historical form of metaphysics, was a *specific* form of materialist philosophy. It bore many birthmarks of metaphysics, which was evident not just in Spinoza; the materialist doctrines of Giordano Bruno and Jean-Baptiste Robinet were no less indicative.

While dualism and certain varieties of materialism were the inevitable consequence of contradictions internally inherent in speculative metaphysics, the overcoming of the crisis provoked by them, and the rebirth of speculative metaphysics, were the result of an idealist re-appraisal of values and of the development of new varieties of idealism. Thus, the irrationalist metaphysics of Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Bergson, and their modern disciples, came in place of the rationalist metaphysics of classical German idealism. But irrationalism is quite incapable of substantiating the need for the coexistence and 'reconciliation' of speculative metaphysics and science. Neothomism claims that, and so do the 'realist' versions of

metaphysical philosophising. So the modernisation of speculative metaphysics in our time is a permanent factor in its development.[15]

Bocheński, whose Neothomist orientation was a guarantee against his critical appraisal of speculative metaphysics, claimed that contemporary metaphysical systems were overcoming the one-sidedness of materialism and idealism and were therefore the most promising trends in philosophy:

> Consequently metaphysics today cannot simply be identified or contrasted with other philosophical movements—it lowers over them just as philosophy towers over the special sciences (16:249).

In counterposing metaphysics as a 'realist' philosophy of being to extremely narrowly interpreted idealism, he considered the main features of contemporary metaphysical doctrines to be *empiricism* ('experience alone provides a basis for philosophy' (16:206)), *intellectualism* (the assumption in addition to sense experience of an 'intellectual experience' radically different from it, capable of comprehending 'intelligible contents in reality' (16:206-207)), *rational method* (according to which 'all reality is rational' (16:207)), the *ontological tendency* (investigation of all 'concrete being in its totality' and of 'all the modes of being (*Seinswiesen*)' in contrast to phenomenology which limits itself to analysis of just one 'pure' or ideal being), *universality* (investigation of all levels of being, including 'the world's ultimate principles' and of what constitutes the subject-matter of 'natural theology' (*ibid.*)), and *humanism* ('their systems pay considerable attention to the philosophy of man' (16:208)).

The main feature of this apologia for speculative metaphysics is a persistent drive to show that the metaphysical systems of the twentieth century are free of the weaknesses of preceding metaphysics; rationalism has been supplemented by empiricism, ontology by philosophical anthropology, claims to superexperiential knowledge have been coordinated with the latest scientific discoveries, the one-sided interpretation of being has been overcome by exploration of all its levels, not excluding, of course, the being of God. Hence, too, the conclusion 'there are no other systems so balanced, sober, and rational as those of the metaphysicians' (16:249). These systems were

> examples of all that is best in the achievements of contemporary philosophical study.... But the fact that Europe now possesses a prominent group of genuine metaphysicians holds out hopes of a better future for the coming generations (16:250-251).

To believe Bocheński, metaphysics had got its second wind, and the 'Thomist renaissance' presaged the advance of post-capitalist Christian civilisation! Matters are quite different, in fact, above all because the metaphysical synthesis about which Bocheński spoke, is no more than appearance, generated by metaphysics' adaptation to contemporary historical conditions.

The centuries-long evolution of speculative metaphysics confirms the description of it as essentially idealist that we find in *The Holy Family* of Marx and Engels. The truth of that was not always recognised by pre-Marxian philosophers, materialists as well as idealists. Helvetius, for example, considered materialism one of the main trends of metaphysics.[16] Hegel, who stated the opposition between metaphysics and physics, suggested that any philosophy worthy of the name was in essence metaphysics, since thinking was by its nature metaphysical, i.e. went beyond experience. The only pure physicists,' he wrote, 'are the animals: they alone do not think: while a man is a thinking being and a born metaphysician' (86:144). That view is directly linked with his doctrine of the substantiality of thought, but it also has a more general sense: philosophy is engaged in investigating categories and in it thought comprehends what has already become its content; here, consequently, it is not something external but thought itself that constitutes its subject-matter. Hegel called such thinking speculative, metaphysical, philosophical. But alongside that he employed the epithet 'metaphysical' to characterise anti-dialectical thinking. He thus not only gave the term 'metaphysics' a new, negative sense, but also retained the traditional meaning of the concept. Dialectics, which, from his point of view, was not only method and epistemology, but also ontology, i.e. a metaphysical system, was counterposed to the metaphysical mode of thinking. Dialectics was therefore characterised as an autonomous logical process, the self-development of a concept, the basis of which consisted in the logical structure of reality itself. A speculative metaphysical system was precisely a system of purely logical conclusions which, being independent of experience, went beyond it and comprehended the transcendent as immanent to thought, which constituted the essence of everything, including human essence. Dialectics, according to Hegel, was the genuine metaphysical method, which enabled one to rise above the inevitable limitedness of experiential knowledge at any level of its development.

Whereas the seventeenth century rationalists, arguing that thinking independent of experience discovered facts inaccessible

to experience, cited mathematics, which did not, in any case directly, appeal to experience, Hegel already understood that philosophy could not borrow the method of mathematics. Nevertheless, he essentially shared the illusions of the seventeenth century rationalists, though he supposed he had overcome them, since he regarded the self-development of the concept as an objective, ontological process that took place in reality itself and not simply in the inquirer's head. But it was this identification of being and thought that was nothing else than a consistent development of the rationalist confusion of the empirical foundations with logical ones.

The adherent of irrationalist metaphysics accuses the rationalist metaphysician of identifying the empirical and the logical, being and thought. But both the rationalist and the irrationalist, in different ways, it is true, indulge in philosophical speculation, i.e. endeavour to grasp the supersensory, supersensory, transcendent purely speculatively. Idealism is, of course, a definite answer to the basic philosophical question, and since that answer is not based on the sum total of the facts of science and practice, it has a speculative character. Is speculation, therefore, not an attribute of idealism?

An unambiguous answer cannot be given, it seems, to that question. If that is so, the antithesis of idealism and materialism is not reducible to an opposition between speculative and anti-speculative ways of thinking. Take, for example, the Kantian definition of the speculative:

> Theoretical cognition is *speculative* when it relates to an object or certain conceptions of an object which is not given and cannot be discovered by means of experience. It is opposed to the *cognition of nature*, which concerns only those objects or predicates which can be presented in a possible experience (116:369).

That is an idealist understanding of the speculative, but it is not, of course, the only one possible. The materialist natural philosophy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, although it was based on the data of the natural science of the time, was speculative in a certain sense, like any natural philosophy in general, since, in Engels' words,

> it could do this only by putting in place of the real but as yet unknown interconnections ideal, fancied ones, filling in the missing facts by figments of the mind and bridging the actual gaps merely in imagination (52:364).

This theorising against the facts, that effaces the boundary between empirical data and the probable, conceivable, and supposed, is a basic feature of the speculative mode of thinking.

The philosophy of Marxism, while disclosing the vast cognitive significance of bold scientific abstraction and sweeping assumptions and hypotheses, rejects speculative arbitrariness, scorning of the empirical data, and undervaluing of facts established scientifically. Abstract thinking and speculative abstracting are far from identical things in spite of their often merging with one another in certain historical conditions. A light against speculative theorising was a basic feature of the historical moulding and development of Marxism.

Marx and Engels highly valued Feuerbach's brilliant critique of the philosophical speculations of idealism. At the same time they stressed that his philosophy was not free of speculation. The fathers of Marxism argued, in continuing Feuerbach's fight against speculative theorising, that the traditional opposing of philosophy and scientific research had a speculative character. The Marxist negation of philosophy in the old sense of the word was also negation of speculation. But it was a negation that did not, in contrast to idealist empiricism (and positivism), belittle the power of abstraction, and did not disparage theoretical thinking.

Idealists frequently make an absolute out of the relative independence of thought from sense data. Such an overestimation is inherent, in particular, in speculative metaphysics. We find it already in the Eleatics, and in modern times among the rationalists of the seventeenth century and in German classical philosophy. Under the influence of those outstanding doctrines, any philosophical generalisation came to be regarded as essentially metaphysical, since it inevitably went beyond the bounds of the experience available at the time.

Wundt, who was far from rationalism as a philosopher, nevertheless wrote:

> metaphysics is the same attempt undertaken on the basis of the whole scientific consciousness of an age, or of a specially outstanding content, to obtain a world outlook that unifies the components of special knowledge (265:106).

A world outlook, he suggested, was naturally a metaphysical system of views. Wundt dismissed the specific features of speculative metaphysics, since he was endeavouring to substantiate it by empirical, in particular scientific data. He concluded, from the fact that metaphysical problems had a philosophical character, that all philosophical problems had a metaphysical nature. Speculative metaphysics was therefore the sole possible path of development of philosophy. 'One will not get free of metaphysics since metaphysical problems and hypotheses are

not at all the specific domain of a special science but recur everywhere in all fields' (265:132).

The erroneousness of that conclusion is connected with a very blurred and extended understanding of the problems of speculative metaphysics.[17] Nevertheless, even if we digress from the antithesis of materialism and idealism, it is not difficult to show that phenomenalism and the other idealist doctrines related to it are anti-metaphysical systems of views. That point, to which Wundt did not draw due attention, since he did not regard metaphysics as a certain mode of speculative inquiry, got an original interpretation in the research of Ehrlich, the West German spokesman of 'the philosophy of the history of philosophy'. Being aware of the obvious opposition between the metaphysical conception of a supersensory reality and philosophical empiricism, he claimed that there was a positive metaphysics, on the one hand, and a negative one on the other. He reduced the antithesis between objective idealism and subjective idealism, and likewise that between materialism and the same subjective idealism, to a differentiating of 'being-metaphysics' on the one hand and 'categorial-metaphysics' on the other (47:95). The age-old struggle of materialism against speculative metaphysics was presented in a distorted light by this verbal demarcation: materialism, it turned out, opposed its own essence, clearly not suspecting it and not being aware of the ineradicable metaphysical nature of any philosophy. The antithesis between materialism and idealism was treated as a contradiction between the metaphysics of everyday experience and a logically balanced, 'critical' metaphysics, consistent in its conclusions, transcendental, and even 'scientific'. And while the materialist critique of idealism was attributed to block-headedness, idealism's struggle against materialism was presented as the necessary negation of a primitive, barren variety of speculative metaphysics.

The confusing, and even complete identification, of such concepts as 'philosophy', 'speculation', and 'metaphysics', is not only an idealist fallacy with deep epistemological roots, but is also a specific form of idealism's fight against materialism. Some idealists are adherents of speculative metaphysics, and others its opponents. But both endeavour to refute materialist philosophy: the former as a false metaphysics and the latter as a metaphysical ideology alien to science. Let us consider their arguments.

The adherent of speculative metaphysics argues that materialism is metaphysical since it starts from recognition of the

primacy of matter, deduces the spiritual from the material, and ascribes eternity and infinity to the universe. From that angle materialism does not differ essentially from the doctrine that considers the spiritual primary, deduces the material from it, etc. These are contradictory views, of course, but they have this in common that they go beyond the limits of any possible experience and consequently have no right to refer to it to confirm their speculative postulates and conclusions. The adherent of speculative metaphysics thus asserts that his postulates are as justified as those of the materialist. The essence of this idealist critique of materialism is the assertion that the latter has as little connection with science as idealism, and that science cannot confirm (or refute) either the one point of view or the other.

Ehrlich claimed that the materialist conception of history was a metaphysical system since it started from such 'essences' as social production, economic basis, superstructure, etc. The principle of partisanship, substantiated by Marxism, he characterised as a metaphysical principle, and declared the scientific socialist ideology to be a system of superexperiential knowledge (see 47:106-110). That interpretation of Marxian materialism glossed over its irreconcilable opposition to religious ideology which, as Ehrlich rightly stressed, is the initial source of metaphysics.

Ehrlich did not consider metaphysicism a shortcoming of materialism. He was even inclined to reproach materialism for a lack of it. He therefore counterposed speculative idealism to materialist philosophy, thus delimiting in principle 'good' metaphysics from 'bad', i.e. from materialism (which in fact is the negation of speculative metaphysics). He did not actually dispute this fact, but tried to show that the materialist negation of metaphysics failed to achieve its aim because metaphysics was ineradicable from philosophy. If we allow for the fact that Ehrlich, like other idealists, considered the essence of metaphysics to be recognition of a supernatural, supersensory reality, it becomes clear that his definition of materialism as 'metaphysics' (though, negative) veiled the incompatibility in principle of materialist philosophy and this idealist trend.

Positivism, as a continuation of the idealist-empiricist (phenomenalist) and agnostic line in philosophy, proclaimed its most important job to be the critique of metaphysics. Comte considered metaphysics a historically inevitable stage in the development of knowledge which, in his view, passed through three stages: theological, metaphysical, and scientific. While

defining metaphysics as a striving to go beyond the bounds of experience, he did not ask about the relative nature of the boundaries of any experience and consequently about whether not only philosophy but also any special science (even when it remained within the limits of empirical research) did not continually go beyond its limits of experience (i.e. beyond any available experience). He simply declared that knowledge of what lay outside experience was impossible, so that metaphysics could not be a science. While proposing to reject metaphysical philosophising, Comte and his followers did not, however, reject the existence of a supersensory reality, i.e. held to the ground of an anti-dialectical counterposing of the experiential and the superexperiential, the sensory and the supersensory, supposing that they interpreted this antithesis rationally and not in the spirit of a religious differentiating of this world and the beyond. It was that metaphysical counterposing (in all senses of the word) that constituted the ontological premiss of positivist agnosticism, at least in the form in which it was presented by its founders. The basically subjective epistemology of Comte, Herbert Spencer, and other founders of positivism, rested on that antithesis. And although they constructed their philosophy as a doctrine of the most general patterns of the reality known to science, they interpreted it (and correspondingly its laws) as an aggregate of phenomena *given in experience,* whose existence *outside experience* always remained problematical. Spencer, for example, claimed that we cannot know the ultimate nature of that which is manifested to us' (248:107), by virtue of which 'the philosophy which professes to formulate being as distinguished from appearance' (*ibid*.) must be considered impossible. That formulation did not just point out a banal truth (our knowledge of being reflects not only being but also the level of development of knowledge of it), but formulated a principle according to which knowledge was discovery of the unknowable. The differentiation of subject and object was thus not the stating or grasping of a definite fact but was the 'profoundest of distinctions among the manifestations of the unknowable' (248:130). The concepts of matter, motion, space, and time were interpreted in that same spirit; they existed only for the knowing subject. The proposition of natural science about the indestructibility of matter was treated as constantly existing in the content of sense experience, from which it was concluded that experience fixed something associated everywhere with a reality independent of it. But experience was subjective, and therefore a phenomenon should not be confused with the unknowable.

> An unknown cause of the known effects which we call phenomena, likenesses and differences among these known effects and a segregation of the effects into subject and object—these are the postulates without which we cannot think (248:145).

That positivist conception differs from Kantian agnosticism in its basic empiricist character, which makes it possible to combine epistemological subjectivism with elements of a materialist understanding of nature.

Positivism opposed objective idealism, which it criticised as a fantastic reflection of reality, the fruit of speculative arbitrariness. To objective idealism was counterposed empiricism, which was interpreted in a subjectivist and agnostic spirit. This circumstance gradually altered the direction of the critical statements of neopositivists; materialism was made the main object of criticism, and was likened to objective idealism and condemned as a very sophisticated speculative metaphysics seemingly based on experience that somehow recognised the obviously speculative essence of Matter (writing the word, of course, with a capital M).

Analysis of the attitude of Spencer and other early spokesmen of positivism to objective idealism indicates that their objections to it related mainly to the problems of a positive description of a reality independent of consciousness. The positivist agreed with the objective idealist that this reality differed radically from sense-perceived phenomena; he also considered these phenomena derivative. But while the objective idealist endeavoured to establish the main features of this primordial reality, the positivist insisted that it could only be defined negatively, i.e. simply as unknowable.

The divergence between positivism and materialism was, of course, incomparably more substantial, the more so that it was constantly being deepened during the history of the former. Whereas its early spokesmen frequently inclined to a compromise with materialism, especially with the materialism of the natural sciences, their successors more and more broke with materialist tendencies, including 'shamefaced materialism' of an agnostic hue. It is interesting to note in this connection that Mach, who rejected reproaches of solipsism and endeavoured to prove the difference in principle of his doctrine from Berkeleianism (and at the same time from Kantianism), stressed that

> *Berkeley* regarded the 'elements' as conditioned on something lying *outside* them, an unknowable (God), for which *Kant,* in order to appear a sober realist, invented the 'thing-in-itself, while the notion defended here is expected, with a dependence of the 'elements' *on one another*, to find the practical and theoretical answer (155:295).

This explanation of Mach's exactly indicates the difference of subjective idealism, which recognises only the interconnection of the 'elements' (sensations), from objective idealism, which assumes the existence of an immaterial reality preceding sensations. And it was from a stance of subjective idealism that Mach explained everyone's inherent awareness of the difference existing between sensations and the thing: it boiled down, in his view, to distinguishing between separate sensations and the whole complex of ideas (embracing past and future experience) linked with them.

The fact that positivism distanced itself more and more from objective idealism during its evolution creates an impression that it consistently fought both the materialist recognition of a reality independent of knowing, and the idealist recognition of it. But positivism does not deny idealism in general, but only objective idealism of the classic type that substantiated the thesis of the existence of a supersensory, immaterial reality. In that connection positivism, while dissociating itself from solipsism, frequently interpreted subjective phenomena of consciousness as independent of awareness of reality.

Positivism's fight against 'metaphysics' was thus above all a fight against materialism. But in our day it is impossible to 'refute' materialism without distancing oneself from the most discredited idealist doctrines and sometimes even from idealism itself. I have already explained above what the idealist 'disavowal' of idealism represents in fact. The polemic within the idealist camp can therefore only be properly understood and appraised in connection with idealism's common fight against materialist philosophy.

The clashes within the idealist camp are evidence, at first glance, that idealists are not so much engaged in refuting materialist philosophy as in settling theoretical accounts with one another. But that first impression is deceptive, because the weaknesses in idealists' doctrines disclosed by the materialist critique are realised in the polemic between them, while the idealist argumentation is improved in it, and a common line of anti-materialist views is developed. Ultimately the divergence between the different factions of idealism prove to be closely connected with the fight between materialism and idealism. That fundamental fact, which also helps us understand the rivalry among idealist doctrines, is brought out particularly clearly by the history of positivism and its fight against 'metaphysics'.

The bankruptcy of the positivist interpretation of materalism as a variety of speculative metaphysics has been demonstrated

historically. Nevertheless philosophical revisionism, which has never been distinguished by independence or profound thought, has completely assimilated these 'antimetaphysical' (in essence idealist) arguments against materialism. Proucha, who proclaimed it his task to 'enrich' the philosophy of Marxism by existentialist ideas, claimed that dialectical materialism needed to be freed of survivals of speculative metaphysics, in particular of propositions about the eternity and indestructibility of matter. These last, in his opinion, were a 'substantialist model', 'metaphysical essentialism', i.e. integral elements of the classical speculative metaphysical doctrine of immutable essences that had been 'uncritically' taken up by Engels (218:614).

> Just like the classical metaphysician, Engels sought the existent, which is the final basis of any reality, and after which no questions can be asked since there is nothing beyond it. At the same time, he also hold this existent—matter—to be that which is in general (218:613).

Speculative metaphysics, of course, considered the existent as such, and that which is in general, as supersensory reality, radically different from the sense-perceived world. Proucha missed the main point, viz., idealist speculation about a metaphysical super-reality. He also did not care to see that a counterposing of matter to individual things as their universal and immutable first essence was absolutely alien to dialectical materialism. The Marxist understanding of the material essence of phenomena does not contain any recognition of a special, absolute being, independent of individual and transient material things. But it was such a really metaphysical conception that he ascribed to dialectical materialism, interpreting the materialist conception of nature as essentially incompatible with dialectics. Proucha wrote:

> How often he (Engels—*T.O.*) speaks about the indestructibility and eternity of matter! From that basic aspect change and motion were only external for him as regards matter (218:614).

So, if one agrees with him, it turns out that dialectics should reject the principle of the indestructibility of matter, which has become a truism of all natural science in our day. Proucha represented as unimportant the fact, that matter is conserved precisely during the transition from one form of its existence to another, i.e. during change and development, or, as he put it, this 'does not threaten the materialism of the metaphysical starting point' (*ibid.*).

Bourgeois critics of the philosophy of Marxism wipe out the radical, qualitative difference of dialectical materialism from

metaphysical materialism, the radical antithesis between materialism (in particular, Marxist materialism) and speculative, idealist metaphysics. The revisionist Proucha did the same, with the sole difference that he, of course, declared all this a development of Marxist philosophy (which, in fact, he disavowed).

Early positivism often identified any philosophy with speculative metaphysics and replaced the speculative counterposing of philosophy to the special sciences by a 'positive' counterposing of the special sciences to philosophy. That framing of the question inevitably led to a nihilistic denial of the whole historically established problematic of philosophy. G.H. Lewis, for example, wrote: 'Philosophy and Positive Science are irreconcilable' (149:xviii). But, while preaching the abolition of philosophy as a metaphysics alien to science, positivism at the same time proclaimed the creation of a positive, scientific philosophy, i.e. tried to combine philosophical nihilism with positive philosophical inquiry. What was the source of this contradictory position, which condemned positivist philosophising to eclecticism?

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, speculative metaphysics had lost its old hold among the scientific intelligentsia in England, France, Germany, and other European countries. 'Shamefaced materialism' acquired a dominant position in the form in which it was developed by T.H. Huxley and other scientists, and propagandists of natural science. Positivist nihilism, denial of 'metaphysics', and a striving to put 'psychic knowledge' (Mach), epistemology, etc., in the place of philosophy, signified recognition of a crisis of idealism, but at the same time rejection of the way out of the crisis proposed by materialist philosophy, and attempts to revive and modernise idealism, limiting it to an epistemological problematic. Limitation of the problematic did not, of course, prevent positivism from defending an ideological doctrine that gave a subjective (agnostic) reply, if not directly then indirectly, to all the main philosophical problems.

Neopositivism took shape as realisation of a tendency toward maximum limitation of the subject-matter of philosophy, which was justified on the one hand by the need to exclude 'metaphysics' and on the other by positive investigation of nature and society having become the subject-matter of special sciences. This limitation of the problematic of philosophy (like the exclusion of 'metaphysics' from it) boiled down to a rejection of ideological (essentially materialist) conclusions

from the sciences of nature. Such conclusions were declared to be introduced into natural science from outside, i.e. from 'metaphysics'. The materialism of naturalists, insofar as it constantly came to light in their special researches, was treated as having no relation to the content of scientific knowledge and possibly associated only with its form, i.e. with the language of science, aggravated by 'metaphysical' prejudices that arose from its imperfection and from nonobservance of the requirements of logical syntax, etc. Carnap, for example, wrote:

> I will call *metaphysical* all those propositions which claim to represent knowledge about something which is over or beyond all experience, e.g. about the real Essence of things, about Things in themselves, the Absolute, and such like. I do not include in melaphysics those theories—sometimes called metaphysical—whose object is to arrange the most general propositions of the various regions of scientific knowledge in a well-ordered system; such theories belong actually to the held of empirical science, not of philosophy, however daring they may be (29:212-213).

The examples of metaphysical propositions cited by him were mainly drawn from the past; he referred to basic propositions of Thales, Pythagoras, Plato, Spinoza, etc., concluding that monism, dualism, materialism, and spiritualism were equally metaphysical, since their propositions could not be verified nor proven in a purely logical way.

The subsequent development of neopositivism has shown, of course, that the limited understanding of verification and proof it proposed was inapplicable to the main principles and laws of natural science. From the angle of neopositivism these principles, laws, and premisses were 'metaphysical', i.e. subject to exclusion from science. That fact, which made it necessary to reconsider the neopositivist 'Ockham's razor', showed that neopositivism was not so much aimed against speculative metaphysics as against theoretical generalisations in science, since they did not agree with narrow (and, moreover, idealist) empiricism and led to materialist conclusions. Neopositivism, while claiming only to study the language of science critically, in fact turned out to be an idealist critique of its materialists content. The denial of the speculative counterposing of philosophy to natural science was inevitably converted into a counterposing of positivism to the materialist methodology of natural science. It became the main task of neopositivism to 'prove' that science was incompatible with materialism and agreed only with subjective-agnostic absolute relativism.

Neopositivists have ultimately been forced to admit that they have not succeeded in putting an end to metaphysics,

and that the methods of clarifying the sense of sentences proposed by them do not eliminate 'metaphysics', which seemingly cannot be banished even from natural science, not speaking about philosophy in general. This forced recognition witnessed to the collapse of the principles of neopositivist epistemology, according to which any statements were 'metaphysical' that did not respond to verification (or falsification) or else were not deductive conclusions. Since there are statements of that kind in all sciences and, worse still, in neopositivist philosophy, the criterion of 'metaphysicalness' (or unscientific character) suggested by neopositivism proved bankrupt.

It has been discovered at the same time (and neopositivists had to acknowledge this) that many of the 'metaphysical' propositions of philosophy and natural science have been logically proved and empirically verified in the course of their historical development. A senior neopositivist, Victor Kraft, wrote:

> Atomism has become a theory of natural science from a metaphysical idea. It no longer hangs in the air as a dogmatic construction, but has its solid basis in experience (126:71).

Neopositivists now often talk about the inevitability of 'metaphysical', intelligible, and even irrational postulates in science. Reichenbach considers 'metaphysical' recognition of objective reality a *sine qua non*. The ordinary language philosophy separated off from neopositivism as a doctrine that proved an illusory opponent of 'metaphysics'. But the language philosophers, too, prove 'metaphysicians' when it comes to the test, primarily because they interpret language as the space of human life and, moreover, the limits of the world. 'There is being,' Yvon Gauthier wrote, 'only in and through language... The real is language, the space open to the reciprocal play of consciousness and its world' (72:331).[18]

The history of positivism—the history of its loudly proclaimed struggle against 'metaphysics'—culminates in its capitulation to speculative, idealist philosophising. And that is normal, for idealism, whatever its form, is constantly drawn to the speculative metaphysics of objective or subjective idealism. The neopositivists' illusion is their conviction that empiricism (idealist, of course) is incompatible with 'metaphysics' because of its antithesis to objective idealism. History has dispelled that illusion.

I have examined the main differences in the understanding of speculative metaphysics and the related differences as regards metaphysical (and 'metaphysical') problems in general. These disagreements, like the struggle against speculative

metaphysics, are a tangled skein of contradictions. It is one of the most rewarding tasks of the history of philosophy to unravel it. The little I have been able to do in this chapter leads to the conviction that both the defence and denial of speculative metaphysics, and the constant change in the sense of the term 'metaphysics', reflect the age-old dispute between materialism and idealism, though in an indirect way.

NOTES

[1] I treated the problem of the development of philosophical knowledge (jointly with A.S. Bogomolov) specially in our *Principles of the Theory of the Historical Process in Philosophy* (see Chapter 5. Basic Features of the Process of the History of Philosophy, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1986).

[2] This point of view was subsequently developed by Paulsen, who tried to substantiate it from a religious-philosophical conviction that the world is the embodiment of a rational divine will. 'Objective idealism,' he wrote, 'is the main form of the philosophical outlook on the world' (202:394). He thus linked the proposition expressed by Hegel with the theological premiss implicit in it; it is this reduction of Hegel's proposition that brings out its real sense.

[3] Thomas Münzer was not, of course, an exception. As the GDR philosopher Ley points out in his detailed monograph *Studies in the History of Materialism in the Middle Ages,* mediaeval mystic doctrines had a supranaturalist character in part, and partly approximated to a pantheistic variety of materialism, as was characteristic, for example, of Meister Eckhart. 'The path from Ibn-Sina to Siger and Meister Eckhart,' Ley notes, 'covers a significant period in the development of philosophical materialism' (151:506).

[4] It is also clear that the demarcation of method and system in philosophy has a very relative character. Herakleitos' dialectics arose not so much as a method as an outlook on the world. And in its modern form dialectics is a theory of development, and consequently a definite understanding of reality that, by virtue of its universality and richness of content, is a method of investigation and inquiry. The same can be said of the metaphysical method; denial of the importance and universality of the process of development is above all an ideological principle that has something in common in several basic elements, or even coincides, with what most often characterises metaphysical systems, since they interpret being as an absolute, and invariant, ruling out any becoming, arising, and destruction.

[5] The Soviet Aristotelian scholar, Kubitsky, points out that the title of the *Metaphysics* came into general use after the edition of Andronikos of Rhodes, who followed the example of the Alexandrian cataloguers in his classification of Aristotle's works (see 128:264). But what signified, for the cataloguers, no more than an indication of the order of Aristotle's works (political, ethical, physical, and those called the 'first philosophy') acquired an informal significance after Andronikos, i.e. began to be employed as a concept indicating a special philosophical problematic.

[6] Contemporary Thomism retains in the main this mediaeval understanding of the subject-matter and job of philosophy. The leading American neo-Thomist, Burke, writes that the main task of Thomist philosophy is to prove the existence of a supreme being and that it collapses if God is removed from it as the foundation of any reality and activity.

[7] 'Descartes and Bacon,' Bykhovsky notes, 'agreed in understanding the decisive significance of method for creating the new science, and development of this method (the antipode of scholasticism) was the focus of their interests. Descartes fully shared Bacon's views on the advantages of *methodical* experience, of experiment compared with *expertentia vaga*, and on the necessity of a rational working up of sense data' (26:60).

[8] This epistemological division of reality does not, of course, rule out the possibility of an ontological counterposing of metaphysical reality to the world of phenomena. In the statement cited above Malebranche to some extent anticipated Kant, who arrived at an ontological counterposing of an unknowable world of 'things-in-themselves' to a knowable world of phenomena precisely by way of a similar epistemological division. That Malebranche had already taken the road that ultimately led to Kant follows not only from the dualism of mind and matter but also from other, more partial propositions such as, for instance, the thesis that 'the errors of pure understanding can only be discovered by considering the nature of the spirit itself, and of the ideas that it needs in order to know objects' (159:III,340).

[9] One must remember in this connection, of course, that the ascription to substance as an attribute precisely of thought, and not of some other more primitive form of the psychic is associated with the reduction of everything psychic to thought characteristic of rationalism, i.e. to a form of thought which it is impossible in principle to deduce directly from matter.

[10] Engels wrote, characterising the relation between natural science and religion in the eighteenth century, i.e. a hundred years after Gassendi: 'Science was still deeply enmeshed in theology. Everywhere it sought and found the ultimate cause in an impulse from outside that was not to be explained from nature itself (51:25). The ideological weakness of eighteenth-century natural science did not, however, exclude its hostility to speculative metaphysics. Newton counterposed 'natural philosophy' to metaphysics, affirming that metaphysical philosophising was a great danger for physics. His famous phrase 'Hipotheses non fingo' of course meant only metaphysical hypotheses that excluded the application of scientific criteria.

[11] The history of metaphysics, the French neopositivist Rougier, for example, claimed, is largely a play of words around the verb 'to be' transformed into a noun by means of the definite article in Greek. Aristotle's metaphysics was based on that logical juggling, which would have been impossible, for example, in Arabic. Rougier, by the way, did not consider it necessary to explain why the most eminent followers of Aristotle in the Middle Ages were precisely Arabic philosophers. He simply stated that the concept 'to be', on which all ontology is based, was one that lacked content and that did not correspond to any living experience whatsoever (see 228:231). By borrowing the argument from Hobbes (or from those who borrowed it from him), Rougier, unlike Hobbes, employed it to criticise materialism. The same is done by the contemporary Spanish philosopher of an existen-

tialist turn, Marias, who claims that the concept of being, derived from the verb 'to be' does not signify anything that really exists (see 162:85).

[12] When the contradiction between Hegel's dialectical method and metaphysical system is spoken about, the dual sense of the term 'metaphysics' is sometimes overlooked. Hegel's system was metaphysics in the original meaning of the term (which has not lost its sense even in our day), despite the fact that many of its propositions, in particular the final conclusions, were metaphysical in the second basic meaning of the word. An idealistically interpreted dialectical principle of the coincidence of epistemology, logic, and ontology, of course, constituted the basis of Hegel's metaphysical system.

[13] Several decades later Ortega y Gasset appraised the situation in philosophy in the latter half of the nineteenth century in roughly the same way, writing that 'the philosopher is ashamed to be such; that is to say, he is ashamed not to be a physicist. As the genuinely philosophical problems do not lend themselves to solution after the fashion of physical knowledge, he refuses to tackle them, and rejects his philosophy, reducing it to a minimum and putting it humbly at the service of physics' (200:48). Philosophy was slighted as a non-science, and the philosophers did not dare answer that it was something more than science. But the crisis in physics radically altered the situation. It became evident that physics could not replace metaphysics. 'Having overcome the idolatry of experiment and shut physical knowledge up in its modest orbit, the mind remains free for other modes of knowing and retains lively sensibility for truly philosophical problems' (200:57). That was written forty years ago. The Spanish philosopher had a rather vague notion of the progress of physics. Since the scientific and industrial revolution based on the outstanding achievements of science, the capacity of the natural sciences to enrich the philosophical outlook by discovery of new, unexpected, even paradoxical aspects of objective reality and knowledge of it, has been convincingly demonstrated.

[14] In the postscript to the third edition of his magnum opus *Philosophy*, Jaspers declared, answering those who reproached him for lack of clarity and definiteness, that this 'inadequacy' appertained to the essence of philosophy. 'The strength of philosophy does not lie in firmly based thoughts, nor in the picture, shape, and thought image, nor in embodiment of perception (all that is simply means), but in the possibility of it (philosophy) being realised through existence in its historicity. So this philosophy [he was referring to existentialism—*T.O.*] is philosophy of freedom and at the same time of the limitless will to communication' (114:I,xxxii). That did not, of course, answer the fully deserved reproach. No one demands of philosophy a picturesque exposition of thoughts, but its consistency and system do not exclude a 'boundless will to communication'. The heart of the matter is different; metaphysical philosophising lost the confidence that used to be characteristic of the rationalist metaphysicians. The denial of *system* that Jaspers passed off as struggle against dogmatism (in another place he declared that he did not want philosophy to be a dogma, leader, or dictator, imposing obedience against the will) was the reverse of the irrationalist critique of the idea of a scientific philosophy, which had not in the least lost its significance after the collapse of rationalist metaphysics.

[15] Skvortsov has correctly stressed this point in the sole study in Soviet literature on the history of speculative metaphysics: 'The old idea of metaphysics as a doctrine of hidden, eternal essences outside the visible

empirical world and at the same time comprising the basis of being, is being modernised by contemporary bourgeois philosophy' (247:5).

[16] 'I compare these two kinds of metaphysics,' wrote Helvetius, analysing the opposition of materialism and idealism, 'to the two different philosophies of Democritus and Plato. The former gradually rose from earth to heaven, while the latter gradually sank from heaven to earth' (99:156). One must note, incidentally, that Helvetius, like Holbach, in spite of this confusion of concepts, was an irreconcilable opponent of speculative metaphysics.

[17] Hans Leisegang, a philosopher of an irrationalist turn, wrote, when asserting that the subject-matter of metaphysics comprised 'all trans-subjective objects in the sense of the word "trans-subjective"' (137:72): 'where the objects of metaphysics (force, life, the soul, the spirit, infinity, eternity, the world soul, the world spirit, and many others) appear, they will be employed as a means to give sense to the real and knowable' (137:77). Materialism, he continued, also stemmed from this introduction of sense into studied objects, characteristic of metaphysics. 'Matter is likewise a metaphysical object' (*ibid.*). That conclusion followed, in his opinion, from the fact that matter was treated as substance. The contemporary apologia for speculative metaphysics is thus based on effacing the difference between the real objects of philosophical inquiry and illusory ones that do not in fact exist.

[18] These propositions develop ideas expressed by Wittgenstein in *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* which of course played a significant role in the moulding of neopositivism. '*The limits of my language*,' Wittgenstein wrote, 'mean the limits of my world' (264:149).

The ordinary language philosophy, which supposes that it has solved the task proclaimed by neopositivism, in the final analysis retraces the path of errors followed by the latter.

IV

THE GREAT CONFRONTATION: MATERIALISM VS IDEALISM. THE ARGUMENTS AND COUNTERARGUMENTS

1. The Struggle of Materialism and Idealism as an Epochal Cultural and Historical Phenomenon

Study of the basic philosophical question and of the natural polarisation of philosophical trends indicates that it is materialism and idealism that are the main trends in philosophy. In the preceding chapters I have already examined the materialist critique of idealism, on the one hand, and the idealist arguments of idealism against materialism on the other, in connection with a positive analysis of problems of the history of philosophy. The aim of the present chapter is to continue and sum up this examination, but on a broader plane, viz., from the angle of the social development of mankind, which takes place not without the involvement of philosophy.

A prejudice of contemporary bourgeois history of philosophy is the idea that the struggle between materialism and idealism is an internal matter of philosophy of no significance for other realms of society's spiritual life. Neopositivists, claiming to overcome this 'one-sided' antithesis, proclaimed that science did not confirm either materialism or idealism, so both should be regarded as lacking scientific sense.

'Everyone knows,' Bertrand Russell said ironically, 'that "mind" is what an idealist thinks there is nothing else but, and "matter" is what a materialist thinks the same about' (231:633). He was convinced, of course, that he was as remote from materialism as he was from idealism.[1]

Neopositivists picture the struggle between materialism and idealism as something like the quarrel between the Lilliputian Tramecksans and Slamecksans described by Swift (see 253). The former argued that only high heels corresponded to the traditions and state system of Lilliput, demanding that only those who preferred high heels to low should be appointed to high state posts. The Slamecksans, on the contrary, claimed that

only low heels were evidence of the true virtues and merits that deserve the government's high confidence.

The neopositivist idea of the unsoundness of the antithesis of materialism and idealism has a marked influence at first on those scientists who had not succeeded in finding their way from historically outlived mechanistic materialism to a modern dialectical-materialist outlook. Subsequently many of them became aware of the incompatibility of positivist subjectivism and the ideological premisses of the science of nature, but only a few became conscious adherents of dialectical materialism in the conditions of capitalist society.

Max Planck wrote, to counterbalance the neopositivist denial of the 'naive' belief in the existence of a reality independent of the knowing subject:

> This firm belief, unshakable in any way, in the absolute reality in nature is the given, self-evident premiss of this work for him and strengthens him again and again in the hope that he can succeed in groping a little closer still to the essence of objective nature, and through that to advance on the track of its secrets farther and farther. (208:19).

The terminology employed by Planck is not, of course, wholly satisfactory, since recognition of the objective reality of nature is not belief but knowledge, which is present in every act of man's conscious, practical activity, and in any fragment of scientific understanding whatsoever. It is that which he was stressing, but in this case the inexactitude of the terminology only emphasises his basic materialist conviction more strongly.[2]

Far from all investigators of nature, working in an atmosphere of vulgarisation and distortion of materialism have been able, of course, to separate themselves from idealist views of the world. Many, on the contrary, adhere to idealism. The bourgeoisie, Lenin said, require reactionary views of their professors.

The conclusion suggested by examination of the philosophical views of contemporary natural scientists brings me back to a thought expressed at the beginning of this chapter, viz., that the struggle between materialism and idealism is not the private business of philosophers. This struggle of ideas fills and animates all spheres of social life. The history of freethinking, enlightenment, and atheism, the struggle against the spiritual dictatorship of the Church and against clericalism in general, the development of legal consciousness, the abolition of serfdom, bourgeois democratic transformations, the development of moral and aesthetic criteria, and the theory and practice of socialism—all these processes, whose significance is obvious, are organically

associated with the struggle between the two basic ideologies, i.e. materialism and idealism.

Let us turn to the historical evidence. Feudal reactionaries were often distinguished by an acute lucidity of class consciousness. In 1770 Séguier, advocate-general of the parliament of Paris, calling for the official condemnation and burning of Holbach's *System of Nature*, declared:

> The philosophers have elevated themselves as preceptors of the human race. Freedom of thought is their cry, and this cry is made audible from one end of the world to the other. On the one hand they have tried to shake the throne; on the other they have wanted to overturn the altars (225:278).

There is not only fear in those words, with its attendant exaggeration of the real danger threatening feudalism from progressive (in this case materialist) philosophy, but also a sober awareness of the fact that the philosophical revolution in France was paving the way to a political upheaval.

Unlike advocate-general Séguier, de Maistre evaluated the revolutionary significance of the philosophy of the French Enlightenment after the revolution has occurred.

> The present generation is witnessing one of the greatest spectacles that has ever met the human eye, the fight to the death of Christianity and philosophism (158:61).

Philosophy (that of the French Enlightenment, it goes without saying) was 'an essentially disorganising power' for the ideologist of the Restoration (158:56), since it fought religion instead of basing itself on it. Its struggle against feudalism was interpreted as a nihilistic negation of civilisation in general. 'I shall never believe in the fruitfulness of nothingness' (158:57).

Although Séguier's pronouncement was aimed directly at Holbach's 'bible of materialism', he had in mind (like de Maistre later) the whole philosophy of the French Enlightenment, whose brilliant spokesmen included both materialists and idealists. Voltaire, who fused together Newton's physics, deism, Locke's sensualism, a critique of speculative metaphysics, and philosophical scepticism, was probably the most passionate opponent of feudalism. His motto 'Ecrasez l'infâme!' inspired struggle against the spiritual dictatorship of the Church. Voltairianism, in spite of the moderation of its social programme, was considered very nearly a synonym for open rebellion against the existing system then. Gogol put the following words into the mouth of the town governor: "That's the way God Himself has arranged things, despite what the Voltairians say'' (77:319). Russian and Prussian, and all

other feudal reactionaries went in terror of Voltairianism.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was the spiritual father of the Jacobins. Why did that idealist put forward a more radical social programme than the materialists Holbach, Helvetius, and Diderot? Rousseau was an ideologist of the lower middle classes, above all of the peasant masses, who were not, of course, irreligious.[3] At the time of the Great French Revolution atheism was an esoteric philosophy of the aristocracy and the part of the bourgeoisie closest to them in social position, among whom we find the farmer-general Helvetius. Holbach was called the personal enemy of the Lord God. He dedicated his *Ethocratic* to Louis XVI, whom the revolution soon sent to the scaffold. Holbach's political ideal was an enlightened constitutional monarchy, but that was a bourgeois-revolutionary ideal of the time, in spite of the fact that some bourgeois and lower middle class ideologists had already proclaimed the need for a republic. The common aim of all the enlighteners, both materialist and idealist, was the fight against feudalism. The question of the future form of government had not yet become a pressing one.

Did that mean that there were no disagreements among the French enlighteners, both materialist and idealist? By no means. The disagreements related to most essential problems: religion, atheism, and the philosophical interpretation of reality. But in the fight against the common enemy—clericalism and scholasticism and the varieties of idealism related to the latter—all the enlighteners were united. Their arguments against feudal ideology were not, of course, of equal worth, and that considerably affected the subsequent development of philosophy. But, to the ideologists of feudal reaction, the idealist Rousseau was no less terrible than the materialist Holbach; this idealist found effective arguments against feudal ideology that the atheist Holbach did not. Rousseau, for example, claimed that the Catholic religion dominant in France corrupted the human mind, an argument acceptable to the man of the Third Estate. Holbach, however, argued that any religion corrupted the mind; only a few agreed with that sweeping conclusion.

Study of the comparative role of materialism and idealism in the history of humanity thus suggests an organic inclusion of these main philosophical trends in a real socio-economic context. The philosophical ideology of the bourgeoisie who were storming feudalism was revolutionary even when it bore an idealist or even religious character. The materialist philosophy

of the bourgeoisie who came to power, on the contrary, was conservative; such, for example, was vulgar materialism in Germany in the nineteenth century. In other, less developed capitalist countries, incidentally, this form of materialism played a progressive role. One can agree with Kopnin:

> The idealist system can be a step forward in the development of philosophical knowledge compared with existing materialism, and play a reactionary role in the ideological life of society, and on the contrary have no significance in the forward movement of philosophical thought and exert a progressive influence on a country's social life (122:111).

Historical materialism, which considers philosophy a specific reflection of social being, denies in principle an unambiguous definition of the social position of both materialism and idealism. The idea that the struggle between the two always reflects the opposition of the main classes of antagonistic society is an oversimplification, bordering on Shulyatikov's notorious conception. The example of the French enlighteners indicates that this antithesis also exists in the context of one and the same bourgeois ideology. Witness the historical antithesis of Hegel and Feuerbach; their doctrines reflected the degree of development of bourgeois ideology in Germany.

The materialist philosophy of the bourgeois enlighteners was, of course, hostile to the idealism of the ideologists of feudalism. Dialectical and historical materialism is a doctrine radically opposed to contemporary idealist philosophy. In other words, the antithesis between materialism and idealism here reflects the struggle of antagonistic classes.

An ideology has a revolutionary (or progressive) character insofar as it reflects the urgent needs of social development. In certain historical conditions, when a transition is under way from one historical form of enslavement of the working people to another corresponding to a higher level of the productive forces, the ideological form of the transition may be idealism and religion. Early Christianity, before it became the state religion, was a historically progressive ideology of the slaves. Religious Protestantism was the ideology of the Dutch revolution and later of the English. It took *centuries* of the emancipation struggle of the working people and long, experience of the class struggle of the proletariat, for atheism to become the outlook of the advanced part (but by no means the majority) of the oppressed and exploited masses. Does that belittle the great cultural and historical, cognitive, philosophical significance of atheism and materialism? Of course not.

The materialism of Holbach, Helvetius, and Diderot was a much higher level of the philosophical summing-up of nature than Rousseau's idealist doctrine. The latter, it is true, surpassed the French materialists of the eighteenth century in his understanding of social life, but it should not be forgotten that pre-Marxian materialists did not adhere to materialism in that domain. There is consequently no sharply expressed opposition in the philosophy of history between the idealist Rousseau and the materialist Holbach, in spite of the substantial differences associated with the latter's atheism and mechanism. Rousseau, as we know, interpreted the history of mankind in a naturalistic way, without resorting to theological arguments, and attached paramount importance to such factors as increase of population, spread of private property, development of sciences, culture, and the state. However paradoxically it may seem, the idealist Rousseau came closer to a materialist understanding of history than the materialist Holbach. That was because of the dialectical approach to certain very essential aspects of social development peculiar to Rousseau.

Engels pointed out that Rousseau had shown with profound penetration, twenty years before the birth of Hegel, that the rise of social inequality had been progress. Rousseau also understood that the antagonistic form of social progress of necessity gave rise to its negation, the abolition of social inequality.

> Already in Rousseau, therefore [he wrote], we find not only a line of thought which corresponds exactly to the one developed in Marx's *Capital,* but also, in details, a whole series of the same dialectical turns of speech as Marx used: processes which in their nature are antagonistic, contain a contradiction; transformation of one extreme into its opposite; and finally, as the kernel of the whole thing, the negation of the negation (50:160-161).

Rousseau's dialectics was undoubtedly associated with his social stance, with a lower middle-class critique of antagonistic society. But it must not be forgotten that the lower middle-class, romantic character of this critique had a reverse, reactionary side which, it is true, only acquired substantial influence later when history posed the question of transition from capitalism to socialism.

A comparative analysis of the role of materialism and idealism in the ideological life of society thus calls for concrete, historical consideration of various circumstances. First of all, one must make clear what social interests of a given historical age are expressed by the materialist or idealist doctrine being examined, and what its social sense and ideological message are. One must

furthermore allow fully for the fact that, in the context of pre-Marxian philosophy, the antithesis between materialism and idealism is mainly one between the materialist and idealist understanding of nature, while their theoretical positions often prove to be quite close to one another in the philosophy of history. Finally, the concrete, historical form of materialism or idealism, and their link with outstanding scientific discoveries, attitude to religion and to dialectics, rationalism, empiricism, and other philosophical trends, are of particular importance. There is consequently a scale of indices of the progressive significance of philosophical doctrines in the context of a historically definite social reality, that has been developed not only by the history of philosophy but also by the whole evolution of humanity.

The struggle between materialism and idealism is a very complex, contradictory phenomenon that can only be properly understood from a scientific analysis of the whole socio-historical process that excludes any schematisation. Theoretical generalisations are only possible when it is remembered that dominant tendencies clash with opposite ones, which often limits their influence. A final conclusion about the comparative historical role of materialism and idealism in the development of mankind can only be based on a study of the qualitative difference between historical periods and the many forms of their philosophical self-expression. Otherwise, it is impossible to understand, for example, why certain mediaeval mystical doctrines had a revolutionary character, which did not rule it out, of course, that there were also reactionary mystical doctrines in the same periods. And that applies, of course, to more than mysticism.

The basic social sense of the battle of ideas between the main philosophical trends that developed in modern times was formulated by Lenin as follows:

> Throughout the modern history of Europe, and especially at the end of the eighteenth century in France, where a resolute struggle was conducted against every kind of medieval rubbish, against serfdom in institutions and ideas, materialism has proved to be the only philosophy that is consistent, true to all the teachings of natural science and hostile to superstition, cant, and so forth. The enemies of democracy have, therefore, always exerted all their efforts to 'refute', undermine and defame materialism, and have advocated various forms of philosophical idealism, which always, in one way or another, amounts to the defence or support of religion (147:24).

There is no doubt about the immense methodological significance of that conclusion for understanding the social role of idealism as a whole.

The antithesis between idealism and materialism is one between *mystification* of nature and social reality and its *demystification*. Religion was the first, spontaneously moulded form of mystification of the world, which seemingly was not realised for centuries as a system of beliefs or convictions, since such awareness presupposed comparison of various religious beliefs, the existence of doubts in the correctness of certain dogmas of a religion, and consequently reflections on matters of faith. The original religious notions were, to use Durkheim's well-known expression, only the collective notions of primitive men which were taken by each member of the clan as directly given and not subject to doubt. The consciousness of primitive men did not, of course, stop at religious notions existing independently of personal experience, insofar as primitive men acquired certain empirical knowledge. But personal experience and its associated empirical knowledge did not function in direct connection with impersonal religious ideology. The latter was assimilated in ready-made form as a system of answers to questions that were not yet in the minds of primitive men; the questions seemingly arose under the influence of the answers. When empirical ideas began to be interwoven with religious notions, contradiction arose between them. The attempts to coordinate the heterogeneous elements of everyday consciousness, doubts, reflections, and waverings signified the beginning of a break-down of the first religious form of mystification of reality. And at that point in mankind's cultural development philosophy arose.

Insofar as philosophy eliminated the primitive religious consciousness, it thereby took the first steps along the road to overcoming the original mystification of the world. The first Greek materialists, while not denying the existence of gods, asserted that they arose from air, fire, etc. Nature was regarded as a self-sufficing whole that had always and everywhere existed. Since the gods of the mythology of antiquity were described as man-like creatures, the materialist theogony came into contradiction with these naive idyllic ideas. Xenophanes of Kolophon, who continued the traditions of Ionic philosophy in a number of respects, wittily criticised religious anthropomorphism: if 'cattle and horses ... had hands ... horses would draw the forms of the gods like horses, and cattle like cattle...' (translator's notes cited from 85: I, 378; see also 68:96).

The tendency to depersonalise the mythological gods definitely led to pantheism. If the early Greek thinkers did not create this conception (its formulation belongs to the age of

Hellenism, i.e. to the time of the break-up of ancient society and of the religious ideology peculiar to it), that was seemingly because pantheism was a kind of interpretation of monotheism, while the Greeks were polytheists.

Greek materialism also gradually debunked the mythological-religious conception of fate. According to Anaximander of Miletos all transient things perished, according to necessity, because 'they give justice and make reparation to one another for their injustice, according to the arrangement of Time' (67:19). For Herakleitos all things 'come about by destiny', which he identified with necessity (42:II, 415; see also 85:1, 293). Neither view is yet freed from mythology, primarily because of the absence of a distinctly expressed concept of causality, which supposes that *each* thing has *its own,* special cause. The idea of a diversity of causes, corresponding to the diversity of phenomena, both significant and insignificant, formed a most important stage on the road to the demystification of religious belief in predestination. Demokritos, for example, discussed both the general causes of everything that existed and the causes that produced sound, fire, and other 'earthly phenomena', and those that gave rise to plants and animals.[4] In his works on medicine he studied the 'causes of seasonable and unseasonable things' (see 68:298).

Demokritos distinguished necessity from cause-effect relations, employing the concept of necessity to explain everything that was constantly reproduced, and so preserved in spite of the genesis and annihilation of individual things. Any event was inevitable, from his standpoint. But this fatalistic conception differed from religious fatalism since every event was considered the consequence of a spontaneous, in effect chance coincidence. But he did not recognise the existence of chances. Epicurus tried to eliminate this vulnerable point in his doctrine, while retaining the principles of atomistic materialism. Epicureanism was an important new stage in the demystifying of nature.

According to Epicurus there was no omnipresent necessity; some things were inevitable, others depended on chance, and others still on our reason. For the first time in philosophy the proposition of the *objective* existence of the chance was put forward. That was a great achievement of materialist philosophy, a real discovery whose significance has only been properly appreciated in our day.

Epicurus disagreed with those philosophers who considered any reference to chance was an excuse, a rejection of explana-

tion. He suggested, on the contrary, that chance should not be considered an 'uncertain cause', if only because much comes to man in life in a chance fashion. His doctrine of the declination of atoms was meant to give a physical explanation for the fact of chance. The declination did not require explanation; it constituted an attributive definition of the atom. Epicurus explained even free will by the declination of atoms. However naive that conception, it undermined the foundations of the fatalist mystification of natural processes.

> It would be better (Epicurus wrote) to accept the myth about the gods than to bow beneath the yoke of fate imposed by the Physicists, for the former holds out hope of obtaining mercy by honouring the gods, and the latter, inexorable necessity (174:408; 198:33).

The aim of philosophy, according to him, was to teach man to enjoy life rationally. For that it was necessary first and foremost to overcome fear of the gods, of the spectre of illusory absolute necessity, and of death. There was no other way to happiness than knowledge of nature, which dispelled all superstitions, and with them fear.

> It is impossible (he said) to banish fear over mailers of the greatest importance if one does not know the essence of the universe but is apprehensive on account of what the myths tell us. Hence without the study of nature one cannot attain pure pleasure (174:409; 198:36).

A materialist interpretation of nature and a naturalistic conception of man were the basis of Epicurus' ethics. The whole subsequent light of materialism against religion has been basically a further theoretical development of this ethical, humanitarian credo of his. Spinoza, the eighteenth-century French materialists, and Feuerbach were continuers of Epicurus, and fighters against the spiritual enslavement of the individual.'[5]

There is no need, in the scope of my book, to trace the history of materialism in order to affirm the thesis stated above, namely that materialism demystifies nature and social relations. That applies both to atheistic materialism and to those materialist doctrines that combine their essentially anti-religious views with deistic and even theistic conclusions that contradict the basic content of any materialist doctrine. Pre-Marxian materialism paved the way, by its critique of religious and idealist mystification of nature, for natural science on the one hand and for the development of theoretical humanism on the other. By rejecting religious and idealist postulates pre-Marxian materialists showed that people themselves created their own history.

The philosophy of Marxism, which completed the building of materialism, not only disclosed the socio-economic roots of

religion but also investigated all other forms of the ideological mystification of social reality as specific forms of spiritual oppression engendered by antagonistic social relations. And while the critique of religious prejudices had been confirmed as a special domain of philosophical, sociological, and historical research before Marx, the critique of social prejudices had been mainly limited to publicistic attacks on feudal ideology. Utopian socialism, it is true, also criticised bourgeois prejudices, but it saw them as a delusion or manifestation of self-interest, since it did not understand the objective mechanism of the operation (and development) of the capitalist mode of production. Only historical materialism laid the philosophical basis for an all-round critical study not only of religious or idealist but also of any other type of mystification of social life.

I cannot examine this point in detail, as it is outside, the scope of my theme. Let me cite just one example, viz., Marx's critique of the vulgar economists' triune formula: capital produces profit, land rent; and labour wages. The unsoundness of that notion had already been obvious in the main to Ricardo, who had shown that all forms of income (revenue) were created by labour. But he rejected the triune formula simply as a fallacy. Marx approached the matter quite differently; the formula was not simply unsound scientifically but, for all its falseness, it was a description of the external aspect of a process actually taking place. Just try to deny the obvious fact that the landowner received a revenue (rent) precisely because he was the owner of land that other people worked. And did the proprietor of an enterprise not receive a revenue (profit) in accordance with the size of his capital? And what did the worker receive? Wages, and no more. So does it seem that the vulgar economists' false formula correctly reflects economic reality? In that case, however, it should be considered scientific and not at all false, while the scientific theory of value (and surplus value) should be viewed as no more than a speculative construction refuted by the facts known to everyone.

Marx posed the matter with all the sharpness peculiar to his brilliant scientific penetration. He brought out the contradiction by virtue of which the triune formula seemed a reflection of reality. But this reality was only appearance. Vulgar political economy passed it off as the essence, since every capitalist, being guided by appearance, attained his goal. This appearance was not dispelled by scientific investigation; so it remained the stubborn fact that had to be reckoned with. It reflected the end result of the distribution of surplus value and its breakdown into

such forms of revenue as profit, rent, and interest. These revenues function independently of each other since each has its 'source', namely capital and land. So the mystification is present here not only in theory but also in reality itself. Labour power, applied by capitalists, creates a value considerably greater than the value of the labour power, whose money expression is wages. This 'excess' of value is surplus value. Surplus value is produced in various quantities in different capitalist enterprises as a consequence of differences in the organic composition of capital due to the technology of production. But competition and the subsequent flow of capital into the most profitable fields bring about a redistribution of surplus value during the sale of commodities. In that way an average rate of profit is formed not directly dependent on the number of workers exploited by the capitalist but commensurate with the size of his capital.

Since land is a means of production under capitalism, a commodity with a definite price, it is a form of capital. The landed proprietor rents it out only on condition of receiving the rate of profit he would get on a money capital corresponding to the price of land.

Marx showed that the antagonistic essence of capitalist production was reflected in its appearance. The triune formula is a statement of an objectively existing relation but one that veils the actual essence of capitalist production and distribution. It reflects facts, but only those that are a negative expression of the objective pattern, whose existence is denied or ignored by the apologists of capitalism. The theory of commodity fetishism created by Marx's genius, disclosed the inner mechanism of this mystification of capitalist relations of production, taking place spontaneously, independent of people's consciousness and will.

Capitalist production materialises social relations. Commodity exchange, and all acts of buying and selling, are interpersonal relations that take the form of relations between things. Human life finds itself dependent on things, and primarily on their value. But value is not a property of things. 'So far,' Marx commented ironically, 'no chemist has ever discovered exchange-value either in a pearl or a diamond' (167: I, 87). Value is a property of a commodity. The latter as a rule is a thing, but that does not mean that the thing is by its nature a commodity. A commodity is a product of labour, but that does not mean that labour by its nature, i.e. always and everywhere, is an activity that creates commodities. The commodity-capitalist form of production

mystifies the product of labour. The amounts of value alter irrespective of people's consciousness and will, as a consequence of which people seem to be in the power of an elemental social process whose form of existence is the movement of things, i.e. commodities. The commodity-capitalist form of production transforms the ordinary thing created by labour, a table, say, into a sensuous-supersensory thing or commodity, which as a value is not a thing in general, since value does not contain a grain of substance although it exists outside of and independent of men's consciousness, like all material things.

Marx stressed that the mystical character of a commodity is born of its exchange value, but by no means of its use-value, i.e. its capacity to satisfy certain wants or needs. On the surface, however, everything seems the contrary since the commodity form itself functions directly as dependent on use-value; if commodities did not differ from one another precisely as use-values, commodity exchange would be impossible. Bourgeois economists were trapped by the objectively occurring mystification of social relations.

We see thus that Marx's critique of the ideological distortion of economic reality is not just of significance for political economy. The theory of commodity fetishism provides the methodological basis for a scientific critique of any fantastic reflection of objective reality, in particular religious and idealist distortions. It helps disclose the mechanism of the reflection of alienated social reality by alienated ideological consciousness. The religious and idealist mystification of the world is not simply a subjective fabrication but a *reflection of facts*. The latter, however, are only the external aspect of real processes, and an aspect, moreover, that reflects their essence in the least adequate way.

While religion, in its original form, was a naive mystification of reality that was dispelled as civilisation developed, and under the impact of the materialist critique, its subsequent forms can be regarded as a secondary mystification of the world, one of whose bases is formed by the idealist outlook on the world. While materialism came forward, from its very beginning, as a spiritual force destroying religion, idealism, on the contrary, comprehended, justified, substantiated, and transformed religious consciousness. It is very indicative that Plato, in opposition to Demokritos, widely employed myths to expound and explain his teaching. For him myths were not just a mode of popular exposition, but one of thinking and understanding. He even created new myths, thereby showing that idealism was not satisfied with the traditional mythology.

Christianity, unlike certain older religions, is based on a previous idealist tradition in which, in the period of the break-up of antique society, notions about the other world, the substantiality of the soul, and a divine first cause, and even of the creation of the world, were developed. It was because Christianity 'enriched' the spontaneously shaping religious consciousness with very important propositions of the preceding idealist philosophy that it became a religion capable of performing its function in more developed social formations. The same, seemingly, applies to Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and certain other contemporary religions.

Study of the historically developing relation between idealism and religion seems to me a most pressing task for a scientific history of religion as well as for the history of philosophy. The point is not simply how some one idealist relates to the dominant religious views; it is even more essential what role his doctrine plays in the evolution and modernisation of religion. Kant's works were put on the Index by the Vatican since they substantiated the impossibility of theoretically (i.e. scientifically) proving the existence of God. But it was just that side of Kant's doctrine which had an immense influence on Barth, Niebuhr, Tillich, and other spokesmen of Protestant neo-orthodoxy, who, while rejecting rationalistic 'proofs' of the existence of God, categorically insist that faith is irrational, and because of that it grasps the divine presence. The idealist-agnostic critique of theology in Kant's works has thus become a main prop of the theology of contemporary Protestantism.

The subjective aspect of idealists' attitude to religion must not, of course, escape the investigator's attention, since the overwhelming mass of idealists *consciously* support, consolidate, and substantiate the religious outlook. Feuerbach described German classical idealism as speculative theology, since it tried to 'invest religion with reason' by means of speculative arguments. That idealist purpose, in his view, undermined the religious view of the world since the emotional content of religion was suppressed by the rationalist interpretation of it. But putting absolute reason in the place of God, and treating the latter as the immanent essence of the world rather than its external cause, rationalist idealism passed from the positions of the dogmatic religious view to panlogism, from which it was only a step to pantheism. The latter, Feuerbach suggested, led to 'theological materialism', which sooner or later threw off the vestments foreign to it and began to consider reason a human, and only a human, aptitude.

The picture of the evolution of the idealist interpretation of religion painted by Feuerbach has a one-sided character, of course, but it fixed one of the real trends in the development both of idealism and of religious consciousness. Rationalist idealism, in striving to convert religion into a rational outlook on the world, thereby revealed its irrational character, despite its spokesmen's intentions. This idealism sometimes becomes an irreligious view since it diverts attention from the special form every religious denomination takes, and sees its real significance in those features of its content that occur in all religions. But, as Marx said in one of his early works, 'it is the greatest irreligion ... to divorce the general spirit of religion from actually existing religion' (171:200). In that way idealists' attempts to reconcile religion with science often have destructive consequences for religion that throw doubt in general on the expediency of philosophical initiatives of that kind. This makes understandable the dispute between Neothomism, which endeavours to substantiate religion 'rationalistically', and religious (and philosophical) irrationalism, which stubbornly insists that religion and science, like the divine and the earthly, are absolutely opposed to one another, by virtue of which any striving to accord the one with the other means essentially to deny the supreme truth of the revelation of God.

The duality of the idealist attitude to religion, or rather to the traditional, not intellectually refined religious views of nature and man must not be explained just by the *theoretical* character of idealist philosophising. It negatively reflects the fact that the development of production, culture, and education inevitably reveals the incompatibility of a scientific explanation of natural and social phenomena and the religious 'understanding' of them. Idealism rushes to the aid of internally split human consciousness, which enters into a dispute with itself because it cannot reconcile reason and prejudice, irreligiosity and religiosity. But since idealism, just like ordinary consciousness, reflects man's social being, it only reproduces the same split in human consciousness, or the religious self-alienation of man, at the level of philosophical abstraction.

The idealist apologia for religion, with all its consequences undesirable for idealism, is analogous to the modernist efforts to rejuvenate religious dogmatics. The modernists start from the contradiction, obvious to everyone, between Holy Scripture on the one hand and common sense and science on the other, pointing out the need for a 'scientific', i.e. critical, psychological, allegorical interpretation of the Christian dogmas, Gospel le-

gends, etc. It is necessary, they suggest, to renew religion, i.e. to reject those of its ideas that are incompatible with science, while preserving its most important content, viz., faith in God and the divine ordering of the world, which, in their view, cannot be shattered by any scientific and socio-political progress.

The opponents of modernism, the so-called fundamentalists, consider any concessions to the non-religious view of the world to be an actual rejection of religion and descrediting of religious faith and belief. In condemning the modernists, despite their sincere efforts to help religion, the fundamentalists point out the disastrous consequences of this renovation for religious consciousness, without noticing, however, that their own diehard conservatism also undermines the foundations of religion.

The disintegration of religious consciousness in modern times is not, of course, the consequence of modernism or of fundamentalism; both only express this process, on the one hand, and on the other are attempts to overcome it, which are constantly being undertaken in capitalist society, especially in its contemporary stage of development.

While idealism of a rationalist hue is like modernism in its dualist attitude to religion, irrationalist idealism greatly reminds fundamentalism. The irrationality of nature, of human life, and of knowledge is the thesis by which the irrationalist idealist in reality substantiates the fundamentalist conception, whose essence was aphoristically formulated by Tertullian at the dawn of Christianity: *Credo quia impossibile* (I believe because it is impossible).

The irrationalist philosopher who interprets scientific truth as a conventional logical construction (in which he makes common cause with the neopositivist), endeavours to disclose the really true in the impossible and, while agreeing with science, which discovers natural laws and patterns where, it seems to the religious mind, there is the presence of the divine, lays it down oracularly that the 'very absence (of God) is a kind of presence and (his) silence is a mysterious mode of speaking to us' (223:341). One must note, incidentally, that this way of substantiating religious convictions by arguments that directly contradict them was already known to mediaeval mystics.

The profound truth of the unbreakable connection of idealism and religion can thus only be fully grasped when the contradictions of religious consciousness mentioned above are understood as contradictions reproduced by idealist philosophy in the realm of abstract thought. Subjectively an idealist philosopher may be an irreligious person or even an atheist, but

objectively his philosophy serves religion though possibly not as a four-square gospel-thing theologian would want.

The naive, unreasoning religiosity that the compilers of the Bible had in mind when they affirmed that the poor in spirit would enter the kingdom of heaven, has become a historical anachronism. Contemporary idealism endeavours to save religion by cultivating a religious frame of mind, independent of dogmas, or by demonstrating that there is no essential contradiction between science and religion. The 'independent' attitude of the contemporary idealist toward Biblical texts may seem sacrilegious to the guardians of religious dogma, and very nearly atheism, but 'free-thinking', bourgeois idealist philosophers in fact promote a galvanising of disintegrating religious consciousness incomparably more than diehard dogmatic theologians.[6]

Lenin constantly stressed the *objective* link of idealism and religion, which did not depend in principle on the subjective orientations of the spokesmen of the idealist trend. Mach and Avenarius were not religious men and did not set themselves the task of substantiating religion theoretically, but that did not in the least alter the real sense of their doctrine, which was revealed in the frankly fideistic constructs of a considerable number of their pupils and followers.

Idealism is the last refuge of the religious understanding of the world. I also apply that to atheist idealists. But how are irreligious, and even more atheistic idealist positions possible? Do they not contradict the essence of idealist philosophising? They do, of course, but the fact remains. The facts exist independently of theory. And although investigation of them makes it possible to delimit appearance from essence, it does not lead to denial of the facts themselves.

Investigation has to disclose this contradiction and so concretise scientific understanding of the complex relation 'idealism-religion'. When Jean Paul Sartre, for example, maintained that the point of departure of existentialism was the conviction that there was no God, and consequently that nothing was preordained but that everything stemmed from one's freedom and responsibility, the Marxist researcher has to analyse this and similar expressions as facts of a certain kind. Study indicates that Sartre's atheistic conception is *subjective* in character; he did not so much deny the existence of God as refused to recognise His power over human freedom and over the fate of the individual conditioned exclusively by this power. From Sartre's angle the question of the existence or nonexistence of God could

not be answered scientifically because of the limited character of the scientific data. Atheism, in his doctrine, is a rejection of *belief* in God with all the consequences flowing from that. In that understanding the atheist by no means asserts: '*I know* there is no God'; the formula of atheism is an a priori maxim of initial human freedom insofar as it is grasped and affirmed in fact.

One can conclude the following from Sartre's atheistic declarations: atheisms are not alike. In denying the possibility of *scientific* atheism, Sartre's doctrine thereby revealed points of contact with Christian theology, which also considers atheism as a revolt against God, a manifestation of self-will whose source is the free will of the individual. The Protestant theologian David Roberts, who preached the need to create 'a new and constructive form of Christian philosophy' (223:337), suggested that Sartre's doctrine helped bring out the deep roots of unbelief and so to overcome it together with atheistic existentialism. In Roberts' view existentialism, irrespective of its religious or anti-religious form, 'should be of compelling interest to the Christian thinker' since it

> protests against those intellectual and social forces which are destroying freedom. It calls men away from stifling abstractions and automatic conformity. It drives us back to the most basic, inner problems: what it means to be a self, how we ought to use our freedom, how we can find and keep the courage to face death (223:4).

From the standpoint of the theologian who dreams of infusing new vitality into Christianity, existentialist subjectivism, the irrationalist critique of 'objective philosophy', existentialism's fight 'against all forms of rationalism' (223:6), in short everything that is equally inherent in religious existentialists and existential atheists, is vitally necessary to Christianity, which is threatened most of all by social and scientific and technical progress.

I have intentionally dwelt at such length on the relation of idealism and religion since the diversity of idealism's forms, and its evolution under the impact of the natural science and philosophical (materialist) critique, has made this relation very complex, contradictory, and ambiguous. Vulgar materialism usually identifies idealism and the religious outlook, with the result that its critique of idealism is oversimplified and the latter's developing theoretical content is in fact ignored. The philosophy of Marxism considers such a critique of idealism to be unsatisfactory also because it loses sight of its concrete historical content.

Analysis of the relation of idealism and religion is also essential because it helps comprehend the struggle of materialism and idealism on a broader plane as one of the most important phenomena of the intellectual history of mankind. The materialist critique of idealism is integrally associated with the critique of religion, and exposure of the latter inevitably strikes idealism a crushing blow. It was not by chance, of course, that all the outstanding materialists of the past were primarily critics of religion and theology. Demokritos, Epicurus, Lucretius, Hobbes, Spinoza, the eighteenth-century French materialists, and Feuerbach, all these brilliant spokesmen of pre-Marxian materialism, considered it their main job to expose the primary source of idealism, and to demonstrate that this philosophy, for all its overt differences from religious beliefs, was in essence inspired by them.[7]

Idealism thus necessarily supplements, substantiates, continues, and modernises the religious mystification of reality. But for idealism, religion would not find the spiritual force in itself to help it adapt to each new historical age, and to survive in any climate, even one very unfavourable for it. The reason for this vitality of religion must not be reduced just to the material conditions that give rise to it. Unlike science, which eliminates subjectivity, religion, as Mitrokhin rightly remarks, is fed by this subjectivity, and therefore functions

> as a special form of expression of illusory social experience, attitude to the world, 'feeling', as a means of peoples 'inner' adaptation of emotions and will to the objective conditions of their existence (185:44).

But the reproduction of *religion* in each new historical age, and its defence against science, hostile to it, are largely realised consciously, and not only, moreover, by those for whom religious preaching has become their professional activity, but also in particular by those who are not directly connected with a religious cult and are sometimes even irreligious, yet nevertheless help religion by their idealist speculations.

> Marx's philosophical materialism alone has shown the proletariat the way out of the spiritual slavery in which all oppressed classes have hitherto languished,

Lenin wrote (147:28). Those remarkable words sum up the history of materialism and its most important result, whose significance goes far beyond the realm of philosophy.

2. Idealism vs Materialism.
Materialism vs Idealism.
Results and Prospects

Diogenes Laertius wrote:

> Aristoxenes in his *Historical Notes* affirms that Plato wished to burn all the writings of Democritus that he could collect, but that Amyclas and Clinias the Pyphagoreans prevented him, saying that there was no advantage in doing so, for already the books were widely circulated. And there is clear evidence for this in the fact that Plato, who mentions almost all the early philosophers, never once alludes to Democritus, not even where it would be necessary to controvert him, obviously because he knew that he would have to match himself against the prince of philosophers (42:II, 449:450).

That story is most likely a legend but, as often happens in history, the legend points eloquently to a fact, viz. the struggle of idealism against materialism in the age of the emergence of these trends.

Plato really never did mention Demokritos, whose works could not have been unknown to him. Guessing apart, one must note that Plato waged a direct polemic against 'the line of Demokritos'. In the dialogue *Sophist* the struggle between the two trends in philosophy was mentioned. The supporters of one of them asserted

> that only the things which can be touched or handled have being, because they define being (reality) and body as one, and if anyone else says that what is not a body exists they altogether despise him, and will hear of no other view (209:398).

That trend, whose spokesmen Plato called awful people, was opposed by those who categorically contended that

> true reality consists of certain intelligible and incorporeal Ideas; the bodies of the Materialists, which by them are maintained to be the very truth, they break up into little bits by their arguments, and affirm them to be, not being, but generation and motion (*ibid*.).

Plato directly counterposed idealism to materialism. Even at that stage of philosophical development the struggle between materialism and idealism emerged as a theoretical dispute. It was a matter of basic judgments and the conclusions that followed from them, of the interpretation of facts, and of the sense of concepts; arguments were opposed by counter-arguments. That is the historical course of the development of philosophical thought and of the problematic of philosophy. I stress the theoretical character of the dispute between materialism and idealism as a counterweight to all the vulgar notions still existing in our day that they express opposing moral stances.[8]

The dispute between materialists and idealists differs essentially, of course, from the normal scientific discussion between, say, adherents of the corpuscular theory of light and their opponents who developed the wave hypothesis. In that discussion between physicists both sides were to some extent right. But that, after all, is not the general rule even for scientific discussions. One must therefore not oppose philosophical dispute and discussions among scientists absolutely to one another; in the one and the other there is defence of definite theoretical views that are treated by their supporters as true, or approximately so.

Inquiry and argumentation are the main philosophical weapon of the disputing parties; and, as the history of philosophy shows, critical remarks and expressions are usually taken into account, if not by the creator of a given theory, then by his successors. But there is no convergence of the opposing views; realisation of the sense of the opposite party's views leads to a deepening of the opposition between the main philosophical trends. Counterviews and the development and further substantiation of one's own point of view follow, and this naturally brings out the incompatibility of materialism and idealism. In short the dispute between these philosophical trends, which differs from ordinary discussion in constantly leading to a deepening and sharpening of the contradictions, has nothing in common with the kind of discussion in which the parties speak different languages or simply do not listen to one another. In other words this is not a fruitless or unpromising dispute, although the parties do not reach agreement. Because of it there is a prospect of its ultimate resolution.

The position of principle in the dispute between materialism and idealism makes a relation of continuity possible between these opposites, however astonishing that is at first glance. The point is not, of course, that the materialist adopts idealist views or the idealist materialist ones. Such an eclectic version of 'inheritance' presents no interest for the history of philosophy since it does not signify a development but rather a degradation of philosophical thought. I have something else in mind, of course. Let me recall that the fathers of Marxism were true heirs of Hegel's dialectical idealism, though their doctrine meant a very consistent negation of Hegelian idealism. As Chaloyan has rightly said:

> It is also impossible to imagine the development of philosophy without the successive link between materialism and idealism.... Let we not be understood wrongly. Here I have in mind the philosophical views of idealists in all their scope as whole philosophical systems, and not the principle itself of idealism affirming the primacy of the ideal (34:34).

in other words, materialism does not ignore the 'rational kernel' contained in certain idealist conceptions. As for idealism, it cannot help taking into account those materialist propositions that have become general scientific truths. It 'recognises' them by reworking them idealistically. Such is the attitude of idealism not only to certain materialist propositions but also to a considerable part of the conclusions of natural science. Recall how Herbert Spencer 'recognised' the truth of a number of the basic propositions of classical physics (as I mentioned in the preceding chapter).

In § 1 of this chapter I examined materialism and idealism as opposites within a specific form of social consciousness. Now I shall try to disclose the opposition of their theoretical foundations. My angle differs substantially from the view that materialism and idealism are incompatible in the main as regards ideology. I have already shown above, on the contrary, that the opposition between them also exists within the context of one and the same bourgeois ideology, a fact that brings out particularly clearly the significance in principle of the theoretical dispute between materialism and idealism.

The character of the idealist critique of materialism is determined in certain respects by the contradictions inherent in idealism. Objective idealism, on the one hand, and subjective idealism, on the other, put forward different, but equally idealist views against materialist philosophy. Objective idealism admits the existence of a supersensory reality, while subjective idealism as a rule denies the existence of such. Let us examine the basic arguments of the two varieties of idealism.

From the standpoint of objective idealism materialism illegitimately reduces reality to sense-perceived and (directly or indirectly) observed reality, so denying the higher, supranatural reality that is discovered either by intellectual intuition, or by irrational vision, or finally by 'pure' thought based on a priori principles. Materialism is depicted as a limited empiricism that clearly underestimates the highest cognitive potentials of the human mind. Lenz, for example, who is close to Neothomism, asserts:

> Just as in the child's mental ontogenetic development interest is turned first to external nature, and indeed to the question of what things are made of, so it also is in mankind's phylogenetic development. It turns to the graspable and sense-perceived, asking what their matter (substance) is and what their material cause (148:36).

The idealist is ready to admit only a historical justification for materialism. As for the materialist philosophy of modern

times, idealism treats it as intellectual infantilism.

The evaluation of materialism by another objective idealist, Paulsen, seems more interesting to me. Materialism, he wrote,

> is after all nothing else than making an absolute of physics by eliminating the spiritual or, consequently, allegedly reducing the spiritual to physiological processes, or simply to chance, 'subjective' epiphenomena of motions (202:394-395).

He had in mind, when speaking of physics, all the sciences of nature. He therefore considered the reduction of the spiritual to the physiological, ascribed by him to materialism, as a physical interpretation of reality. Materialism, consequently, lacked a metaphysical view of the world. In other words, materialism rejected the view of objective idealism. Paulsen therefore also claimed that materialism flourished in 'the lower levels of spiritual life' (202:395). Like most bourgeois philosophers of the beginning of the century, he had not the slightest idea of *dialectical* materialism. The whole of his argument in principle excluded admission of the possibility of a materialist philosophy such as would disclose the wealth of the spiritual, starting from a materialist understanding of social life. For him, materialism was simply an absolutising of the scientific understanding of nature.[9]

It is not difficult to demonstrate the unsoundness of this appraisal of materialism even in regard to mechanistic materialism; the latter applied the methods of mechanics to phenomena that mechanics had nothing to do with. Its spokesmen, unlike the natural philosophers of antiquity, were interested in human life, while treating nature (which they comprehended in the spirit of the science of their day) as the natural basis of men's life, criticising theology and speculative metaphysics in that connection. Even a historian of philosophy as remote from scientific objectivity as Lange was compelled to admit that the problem of man was the centre of attention of the materialists of modern times.

> Throughout the history of materialism [he wrote] there runs the definite defect that the cosmic questions little by little lose interest, while the anthropological ones provoke disputes of ever greater fervour (133:391).

One cannot, of course, agree that interest in the problematic of human life grew at the expense of a loss of interest in nature as a whole. But it is true that it is the materialism of modern times that played the leading role in the theoretical substantiation of humanism.

One objective idealist thus sees a prescientific view in ma-

terialism, and another ascribes to it an extrapolation of a 'one-sided' natural-science view to everything that exists. Both these evaluations, in spite of the obvious difference, are similar in one respect, viz., materialism is said to pay too much attention to experience, is inordinately bound up with the earthly, and ignores the mystic and transcendental not fathomable by scientific means. The objective idealist agrees with materialism that nature, the external world, and the *universum* exist independently of *human* consciousness, thought, and will. But he interprets the spiritual as superhuman and supernatural.

Subjective idealism, unlike objective, usually figures as idealist empiricism and ascribes an unsubstantiated departure beyond experience to materialism, and the assumption of a supersensory reality. From that angle materialism repeals the error of objective idealism, no matter how it interprets this allegedly supersensory reality. Matter, the subjective idealist claims, is not an object of sense perception; it is a speculative essence whose existence is not confirmed by the evidence of experience.

Idealist empiricism counterposes to the materialist understanding of objective reality a nominalist critique of categories, which are interpreted simply as collective names, symbols of a sort, and grammatical forms. An ontologisation of concepts and abstractions (causality, necessity, regularity, etc.) is ascribed to materialism. It consequently is presented as idealism. The extreme expression of this allegedly realist position is the assertion that the concept of matter as reality independent of any experience in no way differs from the religious notion of God. This sophism, long ago expressed by Machists, has become a generally accepted positivist argument against materialism.[10]

A paradoxical feature of the latest subjective-idealist. and agnostic critique of materialism is the appeal to everyday experience and science. Both these forms of knowledge are treated as incompatible with the materialist doctrine of objective reality and its reflection in consciousness. Materialism is accused of ignoring mankind's everyday experience and not being in accord with science, which allegedly confirms the phenomenalist view of reality. Objective idealism opposes this subjective-idealist argumentation and rejects the subjectivist critique of materialism, endeavouring to prove that its basic fault is an uncritical attitude to everyday experience, neglect of the specific nature of the philosophical form of knowledge, and substitution of the scientific description of reality for philosophy. It becomes evident, however, that both subjective and objective idealism are far from a correct understanding of the relation between every-

day experience and science. They do not see what they agree on and in what, on the contrary, they contradict each other.

Everyday, spontaneously formed experience says that there is a world of phenomena outside and independent of the mind that is perceived by our sense organs, puts up a certain resistance to our actions, discovers properties independent of our mind and will that must be reckoned with in order to orientate ourselves in the environment and make use of things for our own ends, etc. Everyday experience is by no means evidence that all phenomena are perceivable by our senses. On the contrary, it follows from the content of this experience, enriched in the course of human life, that a host of phenomena previously unknown to us, later become objects of our observation. That these phenomena existed even when they had not been perceived by us, there is not the least doubt for everyday experience. It is open to facts unknown to it, and this essential characteristic of it is unacceptable in principle to subjective idealism, which claims that the existence of something else independent of experience in no way follows from the latter.

Objective idealism does not often dispute the subjectivist interpretation of everyday experience, but asserts that supporters of phenomenalism do not want to note the subjectivity of the content of this experience. A fundamental underestimation of everyday experience is thus characteristic of both versions of idealism. This fault of idealism is revealed by the materialist critique of it, which recognises that everyday experience has a content whose objectivity is constantly being revealed by inquiry and practical activity.

Lenin stressed that everyday experience, for all its 'naivety', formed the solid foundation of materialist philosophy: 'materialism *deliberately* makes the "naive" belief of mankind the foundation of its theory of knowledge' (142:56).[11] Science also starts from facts that are constantly confirmed by life and are contained in everyday experience. Does that mean that the materialist philosopher and natural scientist treat everyday experience uncritically? Of course not. They analyse its content critically. The data of everyday experience are not the result of inquiry, but are formed from sense perceptions that mainly reflect man's direct relation to the objects around him. Everyday experience establishes the existence of objects, some of their properties and features, and so also the difference between the objective and the subjective. Science often comes into conflict with everyday experience, but the scientific dispute with it as a rule affects matters in which the latter has no voice. From the standpoint

of everyday experience, for instance, light is propagated 'instantly'; that was also the conviction of physicists until they succeeded in measuring its velocity. Science corrects everyday experience but the corrections do not affect the basic world-outlook content of the latter. Science sometimes throws doubts on the existence of a phenomenon about which there are notions in everyday experience. Research may conclusively demonstrate that this phenomenon does not exist, but the proof itself establishes the existence of other phenomena outside and independent of the mind. Science has discovered a host of phenomena incomprehensible to everyday experience and so has not only confirmed the truth of the concept 'objective reality' but also enormously extended its content.

From the standpoint of special scientific inquiry the data of everyday experience are evidence which, like any evidence, calls for comparison with other evidence, testing, and confirmation. But the same has to be said of the facts established by research, i.e. those facts about which everyday, inevitably limited experience knows nothing. Nevertheless science compares these 'superexperiential' facts discovered by research with the 'crude' data that ordinary experience disposes of. That must not be understood in the sense that the data of everyday experience play the role of the criterion of reality. The point is rather that scientific understanding of facts inaccessible to everyday experience is usually achieved when it succeeds in finding the steps that lead from the special results of research to everyday experience. There are quite a few conditions, Heisenberg pointed out, when 'the possibility of a description in ordinary language is also a criterion for the degree of understanding reached in the field concerned' (98:140).

Ordinary language is the language of everyday experience, which constantly confirms the materialist understanding of the world. This everyday experience, consequently, also 'works' in science when it is dealing with objects not comprehended by it. And idealism, which has concerned itself for centuries with discrediting everyday experience, has been compelled in the end to re-examine its own position.

Idealist propositions have usually been 'substantiated' in our day by references to everyday experience. Idealism now often gives itself a testimonial as the philosophy of immediate experience. As the American idealist philosopher Newell says: 'philosophy must begin or take its starling-point in the common sense view of the world' (192:131). This striving to base itself on the evidence of ordinary consciousness, which used to be

treated as 'vulgar', illusory, and anti-philosophical, is partial recognition by idealism of its own defeat. That is also evidenced by another tendency, viz., the striving to develop 'scientific idealism', and a 'philosophy of science', i.e. to construct an idealist system of views by way of a corresponding interpretation of scientific data.

A traditional argument of the idealist critique of materialism is to assert that matter is no more than the material formed by immaterial, creative activity. In rejecting the rational tendencies of the mechanistic explanation of phenomena, idealism in fact took over the vulnerable point of mechanism, according to which motion was the result of external action on a body. At the time, while the supporters of mechanistic materialism usually renounced this limited notion when speaking of nature as a whole, idealism universalised it, separating motion from matter and interpreting the latter as an essence inert by its nature.

An outstanding contribution of eighteenth-century mechanistic materialism was to refute this idealist-mechanistic conception and systematically to develop a scientific-philosophical proposition about the unity of motion and matter. Joseph Priestley, who aspired to apply the principles of Newtonian mechanics to philosophy, went further than Newton, however, in his understanding of matter. Newton said that force of attraction was also an attribute of matter, in addition to extension (which the Cartesians considered its sole attribute). Newton treated repulsion, of course, as an external force acting on matter. Priestley, however, suggested that repulsion was as inherent in matter as attraction. 'I therefore define it [i.e. matter—*T.O.*] to be a substance possessed of the property of *extension*, and of *powers of attraction or repulsion*' (216:ii). Matter, he said, must not be identified with density for the simple reason that it was not necessary to multiply the number of its attributes needlessly. The differences in density or mass characteristics of various substances could be wholly explained by action of the forces of attraction and repulsion. Substances having a larger specific gravity are formed as a result of prevalence of attraction over repulsion. Those properties of matter (inertia, impenetrability, mass, etc.) which were indicated to substantiate the thesis of the passivity of matter were neither primary nor immutable, according to Priestley. In that connection he voiced a number of profound philosophical and scientific propositions. He rejected the assumption of indivisible, absolutely dense atoms, since such a proposition multiplied the number of premisses accepted

without proof. All extension was divisible, 'this solid atom must be *divisible*, and therefore have parts' (216:12). The existence of repulsion together with attraction excluded the possibility of absolute density just as a whole without parts.

Newton, we recall, defended a thesis of the existence of absolutely solid primitive particles

> incomparably harder than any porous bodies compounded of them; even so very hard as never to wear or break in pieces; no ordinary power being able to divide what God himself made one in the first creation. While the particles continue entire, they may compose bodies of one and the same nature and texture in all ages; but should they wear away, or break in pieces, the nature of things depending on them would be changed (193:541).

That view has a clearly metaphysical character.

Priestley came close to the present-day notion of the possible density of matter when he voiced the proposition that

> all the solid matter in the solar system might be contained within a nut-shell, there is so great a proportion of *void space* within the substance of the most solid bodies (216:22).

When we remember that Locke reduced matter (bodies) to density, these ideas undoubtedly mark a significant advance in the development of the scientific and philosophical understanding of the unity of motion and matter.[12]

Priestley was well aware of the significance of his propositions for refuting the theological and idealist notions dominant in his day.

> I hope [he wrote] we shall not consider matter with that contempt and disgust with which it has generally been treated;—there being nothing in its real nature that can justify such sentiments respecting it (216:44).

The subsequent development of science, and in particular of physics, chemistry, and biology, enriched the materialist understanding of nature by such discoveries and arguments as neither Priestley nor other scientists of the eighteenth century had even the foggiest notions about. Much in the mechanistic conception of the self-motion of matter now appears naive, but its basic materialist idea has become ever weightier and more convincing in our day.

Matter has proved to be much more complex, and its motion incomparably more diverse, than was imagined by eighteenth-century materialism. And that does not refute but confirms its most important ideas. The idealist notion of the absolute opposition between living and 'dead' matter has collapsed. Its unsoundness has been demonstrated by modern chemistry and biology. But the philosophical premisses of this notion were

refuted by the materialist philosophy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The theory of relativity, which has shown that the energy inherent in matter is equivalent to its mass, has finally overthrown the idealist conception of inert matter, according to which the essence of matter consists in the resistance it puts up to an effect. Discovery of intra-atomic energy, whose existence was essentially indicated by Einstein's famous formula, was evidence in practice of the truth of the materialist view of matter and its forms of motion and their interconversion. The fallacy of the absolute opposing of energy to matter, on which Ostwald constructed his idealist natural philosophy, became obvious. And the efforts, characteristic of objective idealism, to treat life, in particular psychic phenomena, as processes that were only outwardly linked with physico-chemical laws, but in no way determined by them, also proved unsound. The advances of chemistry, biochemistry, molecular biology, and genetics, and the discoveries of cybernetics, which have thrown light on the general patterns of the purposive behaviour of living systems,—all this has convincingly refuted the idealist conception of the absolute irreducibility of the spiritual to material processes. But it is that conception which forms one of the principal arguments of idealism in our day too. For, since the theological and speculative metaphysical notions of a supernatural, substantial reality have become obsolete, idealism has had to resort more and more to an indirect substantiation of its initial positions. In place of direct assertion of the primacy of the spiritual it has quite often put a negative argument: viz., the spiritual is absolutely irreducible to the material.

Idealism has never gone in for a concrete epistemological exploration of the theoretical procedure of reduction. It has also not investigated the question of the relation of this cognitive procedure to objective processes. Does it describe the latter to some extent, or is it a purely formal technique? Reduction of the spiritual to the material is treated in an oversimplified way, viz., as denial of the specific nature and even reality of the spiritual. And materialism is correspondingly defined as a doctrine that admits the reality only of matter.[13] But the theoretical procedure of reduction never eliminates the reality of what is being reduced. Obviously nothing can be reduced to something else without a residue. The failure of the reductionist attempts made by neopositivists is particularly indicative in that respect. They were ultimately compelled to

recognise that the theoretical, in spite of its empirical origin, is not reducible, at least fully, to sense data. But that does not belittle the methodological significance of the procedure of reduction in research, although it limits its objective possibilities, of course, to definite contexts, including the specific nature of the phenomena studied, their level of development, etc. It is one thing to reduce a property like irritability inherent in everything living to certain material processes and relations, and another matter to reduce theoretical thinking to its basis. But what constitutes the basis of theoretical thought? It has at least three: the physiological process, social practice, and objective reality as the object of thinking. Hence it is clear what difficulties a scientific attempt to reduce the spiritual to the material (within certain limits, of course) comes up against. These difficulties are literally life-savers for idealism.

Reduction is possible as an operation effected by theory only insofar as there is a unity of what is being reduced with what it is reduced to. Unity of the psychic and physiological, of the ideal and the real, the subjective and the objective, enables the one to be reduced to the other, but the process of development as a result of which the psychic; ideal, and subjective arise constitutes the limit of this reduction. The development is irreversible, so that the boundary of possible reduction is inerad-

icable, just as the dialectic of opposites (including their interconversion) constantly reproduces the differences between them. Since the spiritual arose from the material as a specific product of the latter's development, it cannot be wholly reduced to the material. But, in spite of idealists' beliefs, that in no way proves the independence of the spiritual from the material, let alone the primacy of the spiritual.

It happens that a principal argument of contemporary idealism is turned against itself, viz.. the impossibility of *complete* reduction of the spiritual to the material (when, of course, that impossibility is concretely grasped and compared with everything that is possible and really takes place, i.e. the unity of the spiritual and material by virtue of which psychic processes are governed by physiological, biochemical, and other laws), is evidence in favour of the materialist understanding of the spiritual, in particular of the dialectical-materialist understanding it.

Idealism's negative arguments ultimately proved as unsound as its 'positive' ones, but one must not, incidentally, exaggerate the difference between them. For the thesis of the inertness of matter was essentially a negative argument based mainly on the

absence of concrete knowledge about the inner energy inherent in matter.

Not more than a hundred years ago idealism still made it a requirement to recognise, realise, and fully appreciate the initial reality and absolute sovereignty of the spiritual, and to understand it as a reality rising above all that exists in time and space. Idealists reproached materialists with an unforgivable belittling of the spiritual, rational, and ideal. Materialism, they said, killed reason, treating it as something that was born and died together with human flesh. Reason did not know death, they argued, because it had no relation with the features of the human individual that were peculiar to it alone. The brain was surely only the seat of reason, which was essentially independent of any of its convolutions, the presence of phosphorus in its tissues, etc.

Idealism, of course oversimplified the materialist understanding of the spiritual, or rather considered its most adequate expression the standpoint of vulgar materialism, which actually did identify the psychic with the physiological. But materialists themselves opposed vulgar materialism, as we know. When Feuerbach was criticising idealism, he dissociated himself from vulgar materialism:

> The mind or spirit is the highest in man, to be sure: it is the nobleness of mankind, the feature that distinguishes them from animals: but the human first is still not therefore the natural first, the first by nature. On the contrary, the highest, the most perfect, is the last, the latest. To make mind or spirit the beginning, the source or origin, is therefore an inversion of the natural order (58:175).

Pre-Marxian materialism must thus not be treated as a doctrine that turned out to be totally unable to grasp the specific of the spiritual. It made an essential contribution to understanding of the spiritual by its fight against mystification and idolising of the latter, by its theory of effects and doctrine of the cognitive significance of sensuous activity. That materialism showed the idealist notions of world reason, world spirit, and world will to be based essentially on notions of human reason, consciousness, and will that were divorced from man, which meant destruction of their real content, originality, and subjectivity. It was no accident therefore that the fight of the materialists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries against speculative metaphysics developed into a rehabilitation of human sensuality and man in general.

Feuerbach truly caught the essence of the basic idealist argument, viz., that reason cannot arise from the irrational,

and the purposive from a spontaneous, elemental material process, the highest from the lowest, the spiritual from the material. That argument, to which Neothomism adduces fundamental importance, is essentially traditional in the history of idealism. It is an ontological interpretation of the feature of the process of cognition that Marx defined by the following aphorism: 'The anatomy of man is a key to the anatomy of the ape' (170:42). But no one concludes from this truth that the ape originated from man. Idealism, however, in fact, chooses this false path of speculation. Against the facts Hegel claimed that the 'highest organism ... presents us in general with a *universal type*, and it is only in and from this type that we can ascertain and explain the meaning of the undeveloped organism' (88:357).[14] The fact of a purposive relation in a certain field of natural phenomena was thus interpreted as discovery of the highest spiritual instance that established it.

In our day science has compelled idealism to re-examine its traditional conceptions, and sometimes even to reject them. In that connection three tendencies take preference in contemporary idealist philosophy. The first is a striving to preserve the traditional ontological and natural philosophical domain, supplementing and transforming it in the spirit of the requirements of modern science. This tendency finds expression in Neothomist philosophy.

The second tendency is associated with denial of ontology and the possibility of a philosophical doctrine of the external world in general. The third tendency consists in reducing the subject-matter of philosophy to anthropological problems. Analysis of all these tendencies brings out the general defeat of idealism. Let me cite a few examples.

Neothomism, of course, cannot reject the thesis of the substantiality of the spirit, or the dogma of the creation of each human soul by God. Yet it reconstructs its doctrine of the psychic, including an admission in it of certain facts established by science. These confirm only the materialist understanding of the psychic, but Neothomism interprets them as compatible with idealism. According to Zaragüeta Bengoechea, for instance,

> the fact is that the processes that take place in it (the body—*T.O.*) on the one hand condition those of my consciousness, and on the other hand are conditioned by it (266:106).

From this standpoint consciousness and physiological processes form mutually interacting aspects of human life. But the Neothomist retains the traditional formula: 'The soul is the substantial form of a living, organised body', supplementing that by

a forced recognition that the nervous system 'conditions in turn the course of mental activity' (266:113). These reservations illustrate the attempts of Neothomists to soften the spiritualist conception, and to 'accord' it with the facts established by science. The concordance is purely verbal, of course, because there cannot be a really scientific understanding of the psychic if materialism is rejected because it 'does not admit the soul, in order not to recognise a consciousness distinct from the organism and mental or psychic phenomena that are irreducible to corporeal or physiological ones' (266:111).

The idealist 'acknowledgement' of scientific facts starts from a false premiss about the independence of the fundamental propositions of idealism from scientific knowledge. The 'agreement' with science consists only in an idealist interpretation of its propositions. Neothomism regards the appeal to scientific data as a means of illustrating philosophical propositions independent of these facts. That is why, while agreeing with science, which affirms that matter generates such a specific form of its existence as life in the course of its evolution, the Neothomist specifies: if that is pleasing to God. With that approach, the origin of life, consciousness, and thought are treated as greater evidence of the omnipotence of the divinity. The French Neothomist Lelotte declared:

> God gave (matter) the necessary virtualities so that, surrendered to itself in special conditions of constitution, temperature, etc, ... it could become animated (139:19).

For conclusions of that kind there is no need, clearly, to go into the content of scientific discoveries.

The Neothomist ascribes investigation of the processes of divine creation to natural science. Darwinism, which was condemned in the past as contradicting Biblical truths, is now recognised as a wholly legitimate hypothesis which, in the words of Jacques Maritain,

> presupposes the transcendent God as the first cause of evolution —keeping in existence the things created and the spirit present in them, moving them from above so that the higher forms can emerge from the lower ones (163:25).

Idealist propositions used to be cited according to which lower forms were incapable of generating higher ones. Neothomism makes the formula of creationism more precise: the higher can arise from the lower by will of God.

When Duns Scotus asserted that matter acquired the faculty of thinking if God so willed it, that statement paved the way to materialism. But times have changed, and in the twentieth

century Neothomists grab at this argument to save idealism.

In contrast to the Neothomists, the supporters of subjectivist-agnostic doctrines reduce ontological problems to logical ones,[15] or reject them altogether. Some suggest that they are essentially pseudo-problems, others argue that they all passed out of the competence of philosophy long ago and became the subject-matter of special sciences.. This last argument is particularly popular with those idealists who seek a way of excluding the dilemma that constitutes the content of the basic philosophical question. Those who take this approach claim that philosophy does not dispose of methods of inquiry available in the special sciences, and therefore cannot occupy itself with the extremely special problem, i.e. the relation of the psychic to the physical. That line of argument clearly confuses two essentially different things, viz., the philosophical, materialist or idealist answer to the basic philosophical question and special study of the diversity, forms, and levels of development of the psychic, which differ qualitatively from each other, and presuppose study of the physiology of higher nervous activity, including its pathological states.

Materialism relies on special investigations, comprehending them, drawing conclusions for itself, and at the same time stimulating these inquiries without claiming to anticipate their final results. But the materialist answer to the basic philosophical question took shape historically as a theoretical comprehension of social practice and everyday human experience. That is why this answer became possible well before natural science began to investigate the 'spiritual-material' relation.

Lenin differentiated the philosophical and special-science understanding of space and time, matter, causality, etc. That must be borne in mind too, when the psychophysical problem and its separate aspects are tackled. Plekhanov cited the Neo-kantian Lange, who claimed (in his *History of Materialism,* p. 653) that 'materialism is constantly faced with the insurmountable obstacle of explaining how conscious sensation can arise from material motion' (cited from 210:593). It will readily be understood that Lange was demanding an answer from materialism to problems facing the special sciences. The materialist, when answering that kind of argument, of course does not fail to stress that idealism is not able to explain the origin of consciousness, while its discourse on the origin of matter explains nothing. Without mitigating the significance of this counter-argument, one must, all the same, point out the difference in the standpoint of *philosophical* materialism

from the approach of the natural sciences. Plekhanov did just that:

> materialists have never promised to answer this question. They assert only ... that apart from substance possessing extension there is no other thinking substance and that, like motion, consciousness is a function of matter (210:593).

Let me refer further to Lenin's posing of this vital question. He warned against confusing the initial materialist basic proposition with the scientific solution of the psychophysical problem, since it still remained for science to investigate and reinvestigate

> how matter, apparently entirely devoid of sensation, is related to matter which, though composed of the same atoms (or electrons) is yet endowed with a well-defined faculty of sensation. Materialism clearly formulates the as yet unsolved problem and thereby stimulates the attempt to solve it, to undertake further experimental investigation (142:33).

The materialist understanding of the 'spiritual-material' relation thus indicates, in general form of course, the real direction of fruitful special investigation in this field, while the idealist interpretation of this relation yields science nothing and, moreover, eliminates the problem. Positivism and other subjectivist-agnostic doctrines that counterpose natural science to the 'speculative ontology' (and 'natural philosophy') of materialism, clearly do not perceive the philosophical content and significance of the question, which they declare with such ease to be exclusively one of natural science.

Existentialism, in contrast to other contemporary idealist doctrines, holds that all objects of possible knowledge constitute the indisputable domain of scientific inquiry proper, since they are studied independently of the existence of the human individual. Philosophy is not, in general, knowledge of objects, and materialism in essence betrays philosophy if only reality, independent of human subjectivity, interests it. From the angle of existentialism there is a special reality, by no means supersensory yet inaccessible in principle to science, as well as a special kind of knowledge which corresponds to it and that loses its authenticity and truth as soon as it acquires an impersonal, scientific form. This reality is the spiritual life of the human individual; and knowledge of it, which is inseparable from experience of life itself, differs radically from any scientific knowledge by virtue of its directness and subjectivity. Science seeks the reasons for observed facts, i.e. tries to grasp what lies behind them. Science builds hypotheses, and explains the known by assuming the existence of something else, the unknown.

When applied to human spiritual life this approach creates an impression of explanation but in effect yields nothing for understanding it. Furthermore, it eliminates human life's absolute difference from all other objects of science, i.e. its subjectivity.

Existentialism thus asserts that man's spiritual life is only adequately grasped by philosophy, or rather only by existentialism, which comprehends the experience of life itself without going beyond it and without appealing to something else. Materialism, existentialists claim, examines spiritual life by the method of science, analysing its relation to the external world, without perceiving its self-sufficing character. But spiritual life, precisely because of its spirituality, individuality, and subjectivity, differs cardinally from everything that exists; it cannot become an object or the subject-matter of inquiry (i.e. examination from outside) without losing its authenticity.[16]

Existentialism ascribes an organic incapacity to materialism to grasp man's existence precisely as the spiritual life of an inimitable, unique being existing between life and death. To investigate the material dependence of human experiences, decisions, and actions is to convert subjective acts into something independent of man, to convert man himself, according to the existentialist's idea, into the consequence of some non-human other. Materialism, existentialists claim, is a denial of the human personality, i.e. of existence, freedom, self-determination and uniqueness. Only recognition, in fact, of the self-positing subjectivity of the human *Ego,* and the independence of its experiences, decisions, and actions from *external* conditions, makes it possible to preserve freedom and humanity. Materialism is declared to be philosophy of alienation, and even the specific form of alienation of the individual brought about by material production, scientific and engineering practice, etc. In that connection existentialism clearly fails to think about how human subjectivity is possible, in general, without the firm foundation created by the development of social production, which is at the same time development of the human personality. And how, on the other hand, development of the human personality and subjectivity occurred over the thousands of years of the existence of civilisation in conditions of progressing enslavement of the individual by the elemental forces of the social process? Existentialists are least of all capable of understanding the history of humanity, and some of them are inclined to consider materialist 'metaphysics' the source of humanity's tribulations.

A historical, philosophical analysis of this accusation shows that its main points are a development of the notorious idealist doctrine of free will that took shape in European mediaeval philosophy under the direct influence of Christian theology. Indeterminists claim that the freedom of the will implies its independence from motives. The determinist interpretation of acts of will is treated as incompatible with recognition of the subject of responsibility. The opponents of determinism endeavour to prove that it subordinates the human personality on the whole to circumstances independent of it, rules out the possibility of choice, and so on. Pre-Marxian materialism, one of whose outstanding achievements was substantiation of determinism, brilliantly showed the bankruptcy of the idealist conception of free will; only the will's dependence on definite, in particular, moral motives made the human personality the subject of responsibility.

The development of science, and in particular of human physiology and psychology, reinforced the materialist critique of indeterminism. Ultimately, idealists, too, at least the most significant of them, became supporters of determinism, which they interpreted idealistically of course.

Dilthey, who rejected causal investigation of spiritual life (and that means of acts of will as well), and who declared subjective idealism to be the 'idealism of freedom', was compelled, however, to recognise that materialism was the philosophy of humanism, in spite of its opponents' claims:

> The naturalist ideal, as it was expressed by Ludwig Feuerbach in the outcome of a long cultural development, the free man who discerns the phantom of his wish in God, immortality, and the invisible order of things, has exercised a powerful influence on political ideas, literature, and poetry (41:107).

This admission by an idealist is very symptomatic. Idealism is conscious that opposing of the individual's spiritual life to his bodily, sensuous life serves real humanism as little as the religious counterposing of the immortal soul to the mortal, and of course sinful, body. Existentialism is to some extent free of this dualism of soul and body that is essentially foreign to humanism, but it cannot rid itself of the defects of idealism without rejecting its principal propositions. And the old idealist opposing of the spiritual to the material is revived in the existentialist metaphysical (in all senses of the term) counterposing of subjectivity to 'soulless' objectivity, identified without grounds with the sphere of alienation. Subjectivist intolerance of the objective ultimately proves to be intolerance as well of

the human personality, to which absolutely everything is attributed as guilt, since the sole source of human actions is declared to be the self-positing freedom of the individual human existence. The existentialist is well aware, of course, that this freedom is powerless in the face of an objectivity that it does not want to reckon with. The realisation of freedom therefore proves to be defeat, yet there is no other way, the existentialist claims. In that sense his fight against fatalism is highly inconsistent and essentially hopeless.

The philosophy of Marxism, which brings together a materialist explanation of nature and a materialist understanding of history, indicates a fundamentally different way of tackling the problem. Marx wrote, characterising the development of human freedom in connection with the real historical process and its natural result, i.e. the communist transformation of social relations, that freedom in the domain of material production, however high a level of development it has reached,

> can only consist in socialised man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature. But it nonetheless still remains a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity as its basis (167:III, 820).

That proposition is a most important humanist conclusion from the materialist understanding of social life. The dispute over humanism, which has lasted for centuries between materialism and idealism, and between science and religion, has been finally resolved in favour of materialism and materialistically thinking science. Materialism, atheism, and science constitute the real basis of the humanist outlook; they free humanism from superficial, consoling illusions whose source is religious belief and its irreligious surrogates, and open up to mankind a perspective of unlimited and all-round progress. It is a matter, of course, of Marxist dialectical materialism.

Let me sum up. Idealism has been compelled to examine the arguments it advances against materialism. The latter is accused of clinging to everyday experience, of being uncritical of science, of not grasping the true sense of religion, and of being foreign to genuine humanism. By revising these accusations idealism endeavours to assimilate in its own interests the point of view that it criticises. But the 'assimilation' proves in fact to be an idealist interpretation of everyday

experience and science, and a new attempt to reconcile reason and faith.

The impotence of this idealist critique in the main, decisive point does not, of course, rule out the presence of rational elements in it that the history of philosophy has no right to ignore. The idealist critique of the mechanistic materialism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries pointed out the latter's actual limitations, despite the fact that it lacked understanding of the historical progressiveness of mechanism. Idealism reproached metaphysical materialism, not without grounds, of not seeing the relation of purposefulness in nature, although the idealist universalisation of it served as an apology for the religious view of nature.[17]

Lenin wrote that the supporters of 'physical' idealism of the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century criticised the actual faults of the metaphysical, mechanistic materialism that prevailed then in natural science.

> They combated metaphysical (in Engels', and not the positivist, i.e. Humean, sense of the word) materialism and its one-sided 'mechanism', and in so doing threw out the baby with the bath-water. Denying the immutability of the elements and of the properties of matter known hitherto, they ended by denying matter, i.e. the objective reality of the physical world... Insisting on the approximate and relative character of our knowledge, they ended by denying the object independent of the mind, reflected approximately-correctly and relatively-truthfully by the mind (142:242-243).

He brought out the flimsiness of the philosophical conclusions drawn by idealism from the facts established by it. The idealist critique of the shortcomings of a certain historical form of materialism inevitably lacked a proper orientation; it came forward as a critique of materialism in general though in fact it was directed only against the shortcomings of individual materialist doctrines. The illusions of the idealist critique were natural; they expressed the radical opposition of the main philosophical trends.

Idealism thus sometimes pointed out shortcomings that were actually inherent in materialism, drawbacks that it overcame in the course of further philosophical development. The doctrine that idealism considered already refuted became more and more well founded. That proved a source of the crisis of idealist philosophy, the arguments of which against materialism were ultimately turned against itself. Idealism, which accused materialism of denying the transcendent, and of uncritical reliance on sense perceptions, has been compelled partly to reject these same accusations and partly to soften them with

numerous reservations, since the advances of science and the increasing experience of mankind have confirmed the materialist 'heresy'. Hence, too, idealism's paradoxical and at the same time law-governed renunciation of idealism, which I have already noted above, and which proved to be only a change of its form. That made it possible to consider contemporary idealism a utopian attempt to create an anti-materialist system of views free of the defects of idealism.[18]

By maximally limiting the field of discredited idealist philosophy, contemporary idealists recognise that it has proved bankrupt, and seek new ways of substantiating their outlook. The following argument has been advanced in recent decades as the main one: idealism is not the sole alternative to materialism. Spiritualism on the one hand, and 'realism' on the other, are now declared more serious, promising opponents of materialism. Both these doctrines are considered, of course, to be different in principle from idealism.

Spiritualism coincides with objective idealism in its initial propositions and can be treated as one of its main versions. In a certain sense objective idealism is a spiritualistic outlook in general. But the pantheistic tendency often opposes this essential definition of it, smoothing over the spiritualist opposing of the spiritual to the material. Attempts to divide spiritualism from idealism boil down in the end to a negation of this pantheistic tendency.

As for 'realism', this term often serves (as Lenin noted) to gloss over the radical opposition of the main philosophical trends. Neothomists, and adherents of Hartmann's 'new ontology', and followers of neorealism, an epistemological variety of idealist philosophy, call themselves realists. Neothomist 'realism' consists in recognising that sense-perceived reality exists independently of human consciousness; its first principle, however, is declared to be divine reason. In this connection Egorov noted that 'Maritain acknowledges the reality of the external world, but then adds that the world around us is independent only of man and is completely dependent on God' (46:12).

Hartmann's 'realism', while lacking theistic tones, boils down primarily to stating that the material and the spiritual are not primordial but derivative realities within an all-embracing being. Not only the spiritual, but also the material, are thus regarded as secondary, and being is opposed to both. It will readily be understood that the assumption of a primordial neutral being is a speculative-idealist premiss;

being does not exist independently of its determinacy.

Neorealism separates itself from subjective idealism in recognising a reality existing outside and independent of consciousness. But the further definition of this reality is based on wiping out the difference between the subjective and the objective, the psychic and the physical, which leads in the end to idealist conclusions. The contemporary student of neorealism, Hill, declared, comparing this current, with preceding idealist theories, that polemicised against the separate versions of idealism:

> Far more devastating for idealism was the determined attack from the outside, early in the twentieth century, by a strong realist movement that deliberately denied nearly all of the basic tenets of idealism (100:79).

In another place, however, he affirmed something contrary:

> Having complained that the idealists' assimilation of objects to experience undermined the independence of objects, the new realists proceeded to assimilate experiences to objects, with surprisingly similar results.... No matter how much the new realist writes of the independence of the object, he cannot be quite convincing while making objects and experiences even temporarily identical, or aspects of one another (100:122).

These statements must be treated as evidence of the unsoundness of an idealism that claims to negate idealism rather than as examples of a contradiction in the exposition.

While the idealist arguments against materialism have been discredited by the progressive development of knowledge, the materialist critique of idealism has more and more revealed its scientific, theoretical importance. The course of development of knowledge confirms the correctness of the materialist analysis of idealism's compromise position in the great dispute between science and religion. Recognition of the point that idealism is always in covert, if not open, opposition to science, is winning more and more supporters. Idealism's claim to explore a special domain of what exists, allegedly inaccessible to science, is being discredited by the actual development of scientific knowledge. The conception of philosophy that counterposes science does hot, of course, remain fixed; it evolves and is revised since science not only cognises what was declared to be unattainable by scientific means but also discovers 'curious' phenomena of a sort whose existence could not have been anticipated by the most subtle imagination.

The materialist critique of idealism has compelled the latter's adherents to acknowledge certain facts and scientific

truths. The fight between the different idealist currents has been caused to a considerable extent by the materialist critique of idealism. Idealism has evolved from frank supranaturalism and direct support of the religious outlook to an idealist assimilation of naturalism, and to a 'realism' and philosophising irreligious in form. But this trend in its evolution comes up against opposing tendencies generated by idealist philosophising. Idealism is constantly turning back, i.e. returning from irreligiosity to supranaturalism and mysticism. Besides, modernised mysticism was often passed off as related to science and as an outlook possessing deep scientific roots. Thus Radlov claimed in an article 'Mysticism in Contemporary Philosophy', that the mysticism of the early twentieth century 'differed from earlier forms in not being in the least hostile to science' (219:63). Furthermore, he discovered even 'a reverence of mystical philosophy for science' (*ibid*.) That redressing of mysticism is not only evidence of its real bankruptcy but is also an attempt to resurrect it by mystifying scientific data.

The idealist philosophy of each historical epoch thus presents a picture of a sort of cycle, the different elements of which are reflected in separate idealist doctrines. Depending on the historical conditions, idealism shifts the logical accents, alters the argumentation and approach to problems, formulating its postulates and conclusions in a different fashion. Sometimes it comes forward with a claim to real scientific knowledge, criticising science for an alleged lack of scientific character. At other times it claims superscientific knowledge, condemning the scientific view of the world as a viewpoint of semblance.

Idealism often advances tasks of creating a scientific philosophy and even makes a certain positive contribution to the epistemological analysis of the fact of scientific knowledge. In other cases it strives, on the contrary, to show that science has nothing to give either philosophy or art and religion, and that philosophy's acceptance of scientific criteria signifies a repudiation of itself. Whatever all the differences of these notions and approaches, they have something in common, and that is the counterposing of philosophy to the scientific picture of the world, an opposition whose inevitable form is a closed philosophic system.

It seems at first glance that the closed character or 'completeness' of a system is associated simply with an anti-dialectical understanding of the systematic character of knowledge and consequently has no relation to the opposition between materialism and idealism. A claim to create a complete system of

knowledge was peculiar both to natural science and materialist philosophy for centuries. In that case, however, it was not just a matter of a tendency that collided with an opposing one that partially neutralised it, but concerned the main, determinant feature of the construction of a philosophical doctrine that was inseparable, as can readily be shown, from the essence of idealism. Fichte and Hegel were dialecticians but they created closed, complete systems of philosophical knowledge, counterposing philosophy to 'finite' science.

The idealist underestimation of scientific knowledge, whatever form of expression it takes, inevitably leads to a counterposing of philosophy—'absolute science'—to special, 'relative' sciences. That is characteristic not only of rationalist idealism but also of idealist empiricism. Recall Mach's claim that the 'elements' of everything that exists comprise sensations. Even if one ignores the subjectivist interpretation of sensations, in this case, too (since it retains the claim that the elements of everything that exists are perceived sensuously) there is an absolutising of empiricism which, by virtue of that, is always counterposed to incomplete scientific knowledge. The harmfulness of this counterposing is particularly obvious in Mach, who was not only a physicist but also a philosopher who argued that everything that really existed was a complex of sensations. The discovery of atoms, or rather the experimental proof of their existence, which directly refuted his idealist empiricism, caused the following very indicative reaction on his part:

> if belief in the reality of atoms is so essential for you [physicists], then I disavow the physical mode of thinking, and do not want to be a real physicist (156:11).

This frank admission is an interesting illustration of the natural inevitability of the bankruptcy of idealist philosophy.

Idealism inevitably makes an absolute of the separate features of cognition, which is a consequence of denial of the materialist tenet of reflection. The metaphysical materialist usually interprets the relative truth attained as absolute truth since a dialectical understanding of the process of cognition is foreign to him. Yet the metaphysical materialist, who sees in philosophy only a reflection of reality, which is richer and fuller of content than any knowledge of it, is not inclined to treat philosophy as exhaustive knowledge or understanding of reality. But denial of the principle of reflection, i.e. the idealist conception of cognition, entails an illusion of the possibility of completing a system of knowledge.

Engels criticised the inconsistent materialist Dühring for

trying to create a completed philosophical system, evaluating these attempts as clear concessions to idealist speculation. Of Dühring he wrote:

> What he is dealing with are therefore *principles*, formal tenets derived from *thought* and not from the external world, which are to be applied to nature and the realm of man, and to which therefore nature and man have to conform (50:45).

Engels considered such an understanding of philosophical tenets (1) idealist and (2) metaphysical. In contradistinction to idealism, materialism affirmed that

> it is not nature and the realm of humanity which conform to these principles, but the principles are only valid in so far as they are in conformity with nature and history. That is the only materialistic conception of the matter, and Herr Dühring's contrary conception is idealistic, makes things stand completely on their heads (50:46).

Materialism, consequently, is a system of views whose epistemological basis posits the possibility of an infinite increase of knowledge through ever fuller and deeper reflection of reality.

From the standpoint of idealism the principle of the infinite development of knowledge is incompatible with the nature of philosophy; it is acceptable only in the special sciences. The materialist, while denying the counterposing of philosophy to science, naturally does not accept the theoretical conclusions associated with that. Materialism has therefore developed historically as an open system of philosophical knowledge; its capacity to perceive new scientific information and to grasp new historical experience is constantly growing. A rewarding task of the history of philosophy is a comparative inquiry into the various historical forms of materialism.

Engels wrote:

> With each epoch-making discovery even in the sphere of natural science it has to change its form; and after history also was subjected to materialistic treatment, a new avenue of development has opened here too (52:349).

Change in the form of materialism is not reducible to a new formulation or rethinking of its content; previously unknown facts become the subject of discussion, something new is added to the problematic, and old questions are posed in a new way. In short, materialism develops; the materialist understanding of reality becomes more profound, more concrete, better grounded, and new perspectives and new fields of inquiry are opened up to it.

The development of materialist philosophy is similar in principle to that of all scientific knowledge. Just as in the

sciences there are propositions in it that sum up the centuries-old history of knowledge. These fundamentals of materialism can be as little refuted by subsequent philosophical development as the natural-science principle of the impossibility of *perpetuum mobile*. Only a subjective idealist can assume that the progress of science or philosophy can lead to denial of objective reality. As Fedoseev has written:

> We would be inveterate dogmatists if we did not see the relativity of many of the concrete propositions of philosophy and did not understand the necessity to develop and refine them. But we would fall into relativism and ultimately into idealism if we assumed that the development of philosophy presupposed denial of its basic, firm principles (55:12).

Development of materialist philosophy in organic connection with the advances of the sciences of nature and society characterises this main trend in a specific way. Idealism, of course, also does not remain an invariant system of views; it cannot help reacting to the advances of the sciences, which compel it to re-examine its propositions, allowing for and idealistically interpreting previously unknown facts. But the changes that idealist philosophy undergoes correspond to its essence; idealism adapts itself to the new intellectual atmosphere and changing historical conditions. Insofar as it mystifies reality it cannot find an adequate philosophical expression of the advances of science and social practice. The counterposing of philosophising to scientific inquiry greatly limits its possibilities for assimilating scientific advances. But idealism cannot reject this opposition, which essentially stems from the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question and from recognition of another reality allegedly inaccessible to science.

Idealism is compelled to meet the challenge of science and it does so by way of an ever more flexible, cautious, science-like formulation of its propositions. Contemporary subjective idealism can declare, for example, that only madmen doubt the existence of an external world. That does not mean, however, it then adds, that an external world really exists. Such a perfecting of the idealist argumentation, it goes without saying, has little in common with the onward development of philosophical knowledge that takes place in the history of materialism. And if Hegel, say, surpassed his idealist predecessors, that was only because his idealism had a dialectical character.

Lenin noted the identity in principle of the main fallacies inherent in this doctrine when comparing the most developed idealist doctrines with the original historical forms of idealism:

> Primitive idealism; the universal (concept, idea) is a *particular being*. This appears wild, monstrously (more accurately, childishly) stupid. But is not modern idealism, Kant, Hegel, the idea of God, of the same nature *(absolutely* of the same nature)? Tables, chairs, and the *ideas* of table and chair; the world and the idea of the world (God); thing and 'noumen', the unknowable 'Thing-in-itself'; the connection of the earth and the sun, nature in general—and law λόγος [logos], God. The dichotomy of human knowledge and the *possibility* of idealism (=religion) are *given* already **in the first, elementary** abstraction ('house' in general and particular houses) (144:370).

The diversity of the versions of idealism, which sometimes seems unlimited, is in fact limited when, of course, we have in mind the content and not the mode of exposition of this doctrine. A superficial glance at the history of idealism mainly catches the differences and disagreements, but inquiry shows that even the most developed idealist doctrines essentially repeat the old fallacies, which, however, are 'developed', modified, variously substantiated, interpreted, comprehended, and formulated.

The classical writers of idealist philosophy, while criticising their predecessors (often very thoroughly), were usually convinced that they had fully succeeded in overcoming the latter's fallacies; in fact, however, they refuted one mode or another of substantiating idealism, and certain conclusions, posing of problems, and assumptions by no means obligatory or necessary for idealist philosophy. As for the basic idealist conviction, which Lenin pointed out, they gave it a new form, i.e. brought it into accord with new social needs, historical experience, etc.

Contemporary idealist philosophy is usually aware that its superiority over primitive, 'archaic' idealism, like its independence of it, is very, very relative. When contemporary bourgeois philosophers compare the latest idealist systems with the doctrines of Plato and Aristotle, they often conclude that neither the classical writers of idealism nor their successors have advanced fundamentally new problems or overcome the fallacies of these great thinkers. Skvortsov noted the symptomatic character of this conclusion when he pointed out that it had become a common conviction among bourgeois philosophers that the history of philosophy was a sum total of additions to, notes on and annotations of Plato (247:88).

What does that conviction reflect? On the one hand something that really characterises the attitude of most European idealist schools to Plato, and on the other hand the crisis of idealism, which has failed to cope with the contradictions already revealed in the first idealist system. It is very indicative that

the reduction of the historical course of philosophy to a constant revival of Platonism is directly associated with denial of progress in philosophy.

> Philosophical thought [Karl Jaspers wrote] also does not have the character of a progressive process, like science. We know much more, for a certainty, than Hippocrates, the Greek doctor. We can hardly say that we are further than Plato (113:9).

The idealists of our day (though they do not consider themselves idealists) thus affirm that philosophy is incapable of rising above its past. The irrationalist Gerhard Krüger, went even further than Jaspers, interpreting all philosophical doctrines as versions of Platonism. 'Philosophy,' he wrote, 'seen historically, is Platonism' (127:282). He was arguing about philosophy in general, ignoring the opposition of idealism and materialism. The 'line of Plato', however, in no way characterises the development of materialist philosophy, which had already come forward in antiquity as its denial.

Some philosophers substantiate the thesis mentioned above by analysing the latest philosophic doctrines that bear the distinct impress of our times. Heidegger's pupil Kuhn endeavoured to prove that Plato was the father of existentialism, writing:

> As Plato, the pupil of Socrates showed, man, shaken by the exhaustion of the customs and laws handed down by his ancestors, and astounded by the impossibility to understand the sense-perceived world from itself, asks (when philosophising) about true being as the basis of all that exists...
>
> To express it in modern language, the question of being is at the same time one of the sense of being (129:11-12).

Kuhn undoubtedly modernised Plato, particularly when he attempted to express the views peculiar to his philosophy in 'modern', or rather existentialist, language. But doesn't that interpretation of Plato show that modernisation of Platonism is one of the sources of modern idealist philosophy, existentialist philosophy included?[19]

Idealism cannot, in fact, rise above its past. That points to the incompatibility of idealism and science, to which a kowtowing before the achievements of the past is foreign. But materialism, like science, is integrally linked with the present and at the same time strives to the future. A high appreciation of the achievements of previous materialist philosophy does not prevent spokesmen of contemporary philosophical materialism from being fully conscious of the root faults of the doctrines of their predecessors.

Each new age in the history of man thus deepens the opposition between idealism and science further and further, and thereby the opposition between the scientifically philosophical, materialist outlook on the world and idealism. The latter is an alienated form of the philosophical assimilation of reality, while materialism is the negation of that philosophical form of alienation.

How then to sum up? Materialism, which is depicted by the overwhelming majority of contemporary bourgeois philosophers as a naive, long refuted doctrine incompatible with high philosophical culture, has in fact defeated its sophisticated opponent. I say 'in fact', because idealism predominates on the surface of bourgeois society. But materialism lives and develops in the sciences of nature, forming its inalienable foundation. The main direction of the fight against materialism is now formed by the idealist interpretation of scientific data, in which not only are idealist philosophers engaged but also some natural scientists who prove to be prisoners of idealist speculations.[20] Idealist conclusions are therefore not simply introduced into science from outside, but express real contradictions of the development of knowledge in the conditions of contemporary bourgeois society. Nevertheless the materialist doctrine of the materiality of the world has been victorious over the idealist conception of the secondary, contingent character of nature. The idealist doctrine of the dependence of sense-perceived reality on the mode of its perception has been defeated in the struggle against the materialist theory of reflection (especially the dialectical-materialist one). Historical materialism has revealed the bankruptcy of the idealist interpretation of history. And what is no less important, materialism has won in science where absolute epistemological relativism, the agnosticism related to the latter, and sometimes even theories of a speculative metaphysical cast were counterposed to it.

Such are the results. What about the prospects? They are obvious from the analysis made.

3. The Dialectical-Materialist Critique of Idealism. The Epistemological Roots of Idealist Fallacies

Pre-Marxian materialism disclosed the main features of the idealist mystification of reality and of cognition of it, but could not explain the reasons for idealism's existence, or its

historical necessity and place in the development of knowledge. In fact it ignored the essential point that cognition ideally transformed the material world into systems of abstractions. The subjective, active aspect of knowing, which idealism fixes and at the same time mystifies, also remained outside the field of view of pre-Marxian materialist philosophy. Idealism seemed to it to be simply nonsense. At best it caught idealism's connection with the religious outlook, but that was naturally not sufficient to create a scientific historical philosophical conception, which presumed analysis of idealism as a phenomenon of the history of knowledge.

The philosophy of Marxism not only wages an uncompromising struggle against idealism but also specially studies its historical and epistemological conditioning, and its social, theoretical, and psychological sources and organic link with the real contradictions, difficulties, and problems of developing knowledge (and not just of philosophical knowledge, of course).[21]

From that point of view idealism is not simply an epiphenomenon of the socio-historical process, a groundless fallacy, or deliberate mystification. Dialectical materialism does not throw idealist propositions overboard, but analyses them in essence, and revises those that contain rational elements, important assumptions and guesses, and pose important questions. Lenin considered a critique of idealism that merely rejected idealist arguments a vulgar materialist one.

> Plekhanov [he wrote] criticises Kantianism (and agnosticism in general) more from a vulgar-materialistic standpoint than from a dialectical-materialistic standpoint, *insofar as* he merely *rejects* their views a limine, but does not *correct* them (as Hegel corrected Kant), deepening, generalising and extending them, showing the *connection* and *transitions* of each and every concept (144:179).

A scientific critique of idealism is its demystification, study of the content of an idealist doctrine that is essentially independent of it. Recognition of the richness of idealism's content differs radically from the simplified view that it is incompatible with inquiry crowned by real discoveries.[22] The logic of that argument is as follows: fallacy never leads to truth. Such an argument ignores the real historical, psychological, and epistemological problem and represents an attempt to get round the complicated question of the contradictory development of knowledge by means of general phrases.

The history of science provides thousands of examples of how, in fact, false ideas have helped in the course of

scientific development to discover new phenomena and laws. The theory of phlogiston helped chemistry emancipate itself from alchemism. The fruitless attempts to create perpetual motion promoted discovery of the law of the conservation of energy.

A dialectical understanding of the 'truth-error' relationship is needed even more in research in the history of philosophy than in natural science. Lenin wrote that 'Leibnitz through theology arrived at the principle of the inseparable (and universal, absolute) connection of matter and motion' (144:377). A metaphysically thinking person does not, of course, understand how the philosopher arrived at the truth through theology. Theology leads away from truth. But Leibniz was not a theologian of course in spite of his essentially theological fallacies. The object of his inquiry was not religious dogmas but real problems of philosophy and natural science. Creationism put him on the scent of the idea of the unity of the world. The profound idea of the link of motion and matter seemed a necessary conclusion to him from the theological conception of a single (created) universe. But he endeavoured to substantiate this idea by an investigation of the facts.

It was not by chance, of course, that dialectical logic arose in the womb of German classical idealism. Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel were dialecticians not in spite of their idealist convictions; at that time a materialist dialectics as a philosophical science was in general impossible. While, as Engels put it, 'the relation of idealist dialectics to rational dialectics is the same as ... that of the phlogistic theory to the theory of Lavoisier' (51:49), i.e. to a scientific understanding of heat, an unscientific form of dialectics necessarily preceded its scientific one. It is naive to suggest that a scientific system of views can arise immediately, in ready-made form. An idealist theory proves, in certain historical conditions, to be the prehistory of the scientific solution of a problem.

A dialectical-materialist analysis of idealist fallacies does not boil down, of course, to bringing out the richness of their content. If one limited oneself to that, one would not get a historical analysis of those errors but a glossing over of idealism's hostility to the scientific outlook on the world. It is therefore important to show that when idealism expresses an essentially correct idea, it inevitably distorts its content, passing it off as confirmation of its basic fallacy. Let me cite Schelling as an example: when criticising mechanistic natural philosophy and counterposing a dialectical understanding of nature to it, he interpreted it in a spirit of mysticism.

> As soon as we trespass in the held of *organic nature*, all mechanical linking of cause and effect ceases for us [he wrote]. Every organic product exists for *itself*, and its existence does not depend on any other existence (239:690).

In reality the animate does not exist outside mechanical relations, but includes them; the animate, of course, does not possess absolute autonomy. Schelling was clearly mistaken when he claimed that life, as a specific organisation, '*produces itself* and originates *from itself*' (*ibid*.) He criticised mechanism, rejecting this historically progressive view of nature in the name of idealism. But his idealist natural philosophy had a dialectical character. That gave Asmus grounds for the following conclusion:

> Schelling's basically idealist view of nature played a positive role; it limited the mechanism predominant in eighteenth-century natural science and led to the concept of a universal connection of the things and phenomena of nature (10:269).

The rational ideas, and posing of problems and surmises, that any idealist theory contains are inevitably deformed by its basic anti-scientific trend. They can be revealed by a materialist reworking of the false that, however, contains some elements of the true, rather than by a direct delimitation of the true and the false.

The dialectical-materialist critique of idealism differs qualitatively from any other critique of idealist philosophy in being a theoretical, historical, sociological, psychological, and epistemological inquiry into this specific form of social consciousness. I cannot, naturally, examine all the aspects and special problems of this inquiry here; for the present work the most important direction of the critique of idealism is exploration of its epistemological sources.

Every idealist fallacy has epistemological roots, i.e. has a profound character and differs in that from a simple logical mistake whose cause is a breach of the rules of logic.[23] There is no sense, of course, in speaking of the epistemological roots of a true statement, since it includes something more, namely an adequate reflection of reality. It is therefore not legitimate to pose the question of the epistemological roots of materialist philosophy, even though the fallacies inherent in certain historical forms of materialism have their epistemological roots.

The critique of separate idealist conceptions, for example, the theory of innate ideas or conventionalism, includes analysis of their specific epistemological sources. But the basic sense

of the doctrine of the epistemological roots of idealism developed by Lenin consists in investigation of the very possibility of idealism as such. This possibility is immanent in the process, structure, and elementary forms of cognition. The point, consequently, is to examine idealism as a system of fallacies that has taken shape and developed in the course of cognition and not somewhere on its periphery. That is the first point. Secondly, Lenin posed the question of the epistemological characteristics of idealist speculation.

The possibility of idealism already existed in the first elementary abstraction, i.e. the singling out of the general. The general exists in an isolated way only as an abstraction, a concept, a collective name. In objective reality there is no general without the particular and the individual. The individual and separate are general precisely in this, their universal definiteness. The particular is also a form of the universal. To single out the general is to counterpose it to the particular and the individual, since that separates it from them, a counterposing that comes about through the linguistic (sign) form of any knowledge. Language fixes the general, a word expresses the general, but as a sign it does not depend on the things that it signifies. This relative independence of the concept, word, and language in general is manifested in the possibilities of word formation according to the rules of grammar. Hobbes claimed that the word 'perfection' arose from the word 'imperfection' by discarding the prefix 'im'. Whether or not he was right, it is clear that the possibility of forming new words can be realised independently of the real objects to which they should be related. There are therefore words that signify what does not in fact exist.

The word 'idea', as I have already said, signified 'form, kind' in Greek. Plato spoke of the form of things, i.e. of how they looked, and how they differed from other things. But because many things had something inherent in common, in spite of individual differences, the word 'kind' was also used to distinguish whole classes of phenomena: tables, horses, etc. Plato said: a kind was preserved as something in common (or identity) in spite of each representative of a kind being mortal. The properties of a kind were interpreted as opposed to those of the constituent individuals. The individuals were sensuously perceived, corporeal, mortal, imperfect phenomena; form or kind was supersensory, incorporeal, eternal, perfect essence. I must stress that a one-sided interpretation of the process of transition from perceptions of individual things to concepts

also leads to this idealist ontology. If there is a concept of tree in man's consciousness as some essence common to countless single trees, but at the same time different from these individual things because of its generality, one may ask which comes first, the single trees before their common essence or the latter before the single trees. That was roughly the course of Plato's thought, which supposed that only the existence of the idea of a tree enabled a person who saw one to say 'That is a tree'. Sense perception was characterised as recognising things according to the ideas in a person's mind. But where did the ideas come from? They did not come from anywhere, Plato suggested, rejecting the sensualist understanding of *eide* and counterposing a mystical pseudoexplanation to it based on mythology.

He did not just draw a line between the general and the individual, the single and the many, the concept and the thing, but also counterposed them absolutely. The general, severed from single things, was transformed into their essence, which was thought of as being outside them. The essence was primary: it generated all single things. The object whose properties were generalised in the concept (idea) was treated as the consequence of its own properties transformed into an ideal essence. Thus, an idealist system of views arose on the basis of an ontological interpretation of the concept.

Aristotle correctly remarked that Plato's theory of ideas was associated with investigation of the essence of concepts.[24] That remark indicates that he was already posing the question of the epistemological roots of idealism, and that is why his critique of Plato's idealism was one of idealism in general. But in his time the question of the relationship of the general and the individual could only be posed in a very general, abstract form.

The dispute about universals in mediaeval scholasticism, when we abstract the theological pseudoproblems, was a continuation of the discussion between Aristotle and Plato. Mediaeval nominalism was an attempt to correct the inconsistency of Aristotle's critique of the Platonic doctrine of the primacy of ideas. From the standpoint of nominalism things were primary as regards general concepts regarded as collective nouns. That posing of the question was not yet a denial of idealism in general, but was a denial of one of the versions of idealist philosophising.

The mediaeval nominalists considered single things the result of divine creation. Only the materialist nominalism of modern

times, in the person of Thomas Hobbes, reached the conclusion that single things (or bodies) were the sole reality. Locke developed the same point of view, though inconsistently. Both of these materialists interpreted the general only as a phenomenon of consciousness, a mode of uniting sense perceptions that related to individual objects. In opposition to rationalism, which substantiated the objectivity of the general, Locke said: 'general and universal belong not to the real existence of things; but are the inventions and creatures of the understanding, made by it for its own use' (152:330).

The empiricist materialists supposed that idealism (they had in mind its rationalist version) was inevitably associated with recognition of the objective reality of the general. But Berkeley had already constructed a nominalist system of idealism in which such concepts as 'matter' and 'substance' were no more than names, because there were no universal essences but only individual sensations and combinations of same, which formed what were called things. But the 'thing' or 'body' as such did not exist. The flimsiness of Berkeley's subjective idealism did not rule out this false doctrine's distorting the real relation between abstractions and the phenomena from which they were drawn.

> Matter as such [Engels wrote] is a pure creation of thought and an abstraction. We leave out of account the qualitative differences of things in lumping them together as corporeally existing things under the concept matter (51:255)

It did not follow from that, however, he stressed, that 'fruit as such' existed and that real apples, pears, and cherries were only modification of them. Metal as such, gas as such, chemical compounds as such did not exist, according to him, since the general could only be separated from the particular and individual mentally, by way of abstraction (*ibid.*).

The various forms of idealism thus have their epistemological source in a law-governed splitting of knowledge, a contradiction between the rational and sensory, the theoretical and empirical. Idealist philosophising is a consequence of an unrestrained abstracting which, not conforming to the nature of objects, oversteps the measure of abstraction, so to speak, and ultimately replaces the objects by abstractions.

> Is it surprising [Karl Marx wrote] that, if you let drop little by little all that constitutes the individuality of a house, leaving out first of all the materials of which it is composed, then the form that distinguishes it, you end up with nothing but a body; that, if you leave out of account the limits of this body, you soon have nothing but a space—that if, finally, you leave out of account the dimensions

> of this space, there is absolutely nothing left but pure quantity, the logical category? If we abstract thus from every subject all the alleged accidents, animate or inanimate, men or things, we are right in saying that in the final abstraction, the only substance left is the logical categories (175:98-99).

The reduction, not limited by any bounds whatever and therefore an illegitimate reduction, of all sense-perceived reality to logical determinations, is often comprehended as a continuous penetration into the essence of phenomena. By breaking away from reality a philosopher preserves the illusion of an ever closer approximation to it. That is how the real possibility of idealism arises.[25]

Subjectivism is thus the main epistemological source of both subjective and objective idealism. Subjectivity, as a capacity for abstract thinking, for creating and operating with signs, and for oversimplification of the real picture of things in order to know them better, is a necessary cognitive and creative capacity of man without which no intellectual activity whatsoever is possible. Subjectivism, however—its negative aspect, the possibility of which can never be excluded—consists in ignoring the need to reflect objective reality and in neglect of the epistemological imperative that any really cogitative thinking must willy-nilly observe. Transformation of necessary and fruitful subjectivity into subjectivism and 'subjective blindness' (in Lenin's expression (144:361)). Such is the main path of the forming of the idealist outlook on the world.

Objective idealism absolutises the relative independence of theoretical thinking from empirical data. That is not only how apriorism arises but also how the notion of the possibility of supersensory knowledge, and a conviction of the existence of transcendent reality comes about. That relative independence of the theoretical from the empirical, however, includes the possibility of subjective idealism, which supposes that knowledge creates the object of knowing, which becomes the object of sense perception as a result of this usually unconscious creative act. Such are the epistemological roots of Neokantian subjective idealism and neopositivist conventionalism.

Unlike the other varieties of subjective idealism phenomenalism is epistemologically rooted in a subjectivist interpretation of the content of sense perceptions. This interpretation fixes the fact that subjectivity, the inherent form of sense perceptions, cannot help affecting their content. The form and content of sense perceptions are not absolutely opposed to one another, of course, but the dialectic of this opposition does

not eliminate the real difference between them. Underestimation of this difference constitutes the real possibility of idealism.

Idealist empiricism counterposes the sensuous to the abstract, by which means the objective forms of universality are cognised. This opposition leads to a subjectivist interpretation not only of the content of the abstract concepts but also of the sensations themselves. Subjective idealism of an empiricist hue often poses as epistemological naturalism, which denies the reality of the supersensory and affirms that only sensations exist and that which they form. The epistemological source of this subjective-idealist conception is a real feature of cognition, namely that sense data are really what is given and are not produced in the course of cognition, and in that sense must be taken as the starting point.[26]

Since the sense organs witness to the existence and inherent properties of objects but do not prove their existence, awareness of the difference between the evidence and proof constitutes an important stage in the road from naive realism to a scientific, materialist view of the world. But the criteria of this delimitation are not contained in consciousness, and that fact also forms one of the epistemological sources of subjective idealism, which asserts that the dividing line between sensations and things is nothing other than that between some sensations and others.

The epistemological roots of idealism come to light, consequently, not only in the structure of cognitive activity but also in the course of the development of knowledge, by virtue of which the possibility of idealist mystification of reality is constantly reproduced. In that case idealism grows from distortions, and the absolutising of the truth or a particle of truth that is a result of the cognitive process. That also, in particular, explains why idealism often exists as a parasite on the real advances of science, which gives it a semblance of scientific character.

Lenin criticised Plekhanov for ignoring the link between Machism and the revolution in physics, stressing that such an approach to idealism contradicted the spirit of the philosophy of Marxism. His comment has general methodological significance.

> Human knowledge [Lenin wrote] is not (or does not follow) a straight line, but a curve, which endlessly approximates a series of circles, a spiral. Any fragment, segment, section of this curve can be transformed (transformed one-sidedly) into an independent, complete, straight line, which then (if one does not see the wood for the trees) leads into the quagmire, into clerical obscurantism (where it is *anchored* by the class interests of the ruling classes) (144:361).

Idealism, he stressed, grows from the living tree of fruitbearing, true, powerful human knowledge. It is not just a fallacy but fallacious knowledge, a misinterpreting of the facts of objective reality and of consciousness, a distorted understanding of knowledge, and consequently of the particles of truth that one idealist or another sometimes discovers. To bring out the epistemological roots of the idealist conception means to explicate the particle of truth that it contains. Lenin's doctrine of the epistemological roots of idealism, A.D. Alexandrov wrote, pointed out

> the general path of consistently scientific struggle against idealism in science. This path consists in distinctly bringing out those features of a theory that idealism illegitimately exaggerates and, thereby, having put these features in their proper place and given them a true explanation, to undercut the very root of idealist interpretations (3:41).

That posing of the problem distinguishes the Marxist critique of idealism in principle from the positivist denial of certain idealist doctrines.

Neopositivism, in particular the ordinary language philosophy, criticises objective idealism as empty philosophising and the purest verbalism generated by the structural features of ordinary language, its inevitable imperfections, and other causes that have no direct relation to the content of knowledge. Let me dwell, in this connection, on Rougier's book *Metaphysics and Language.*

Like other neopositivists, Rougier distinguished the primary and the secondary language. The first consists of statements, i.e. sentences that do not contain logical terms and can therefore be called 'atomic'. They express sense data and the words comprising them relate directly to objects. Atomic sentences therefore do not require verification, and the 'primary language' formed from them is simply a language of facts, incompatible with 'idealist' fallacies. The 'secondary language' is another matter, consisting of 'molecular' sentences built up from sentences of the primary language connected by logical constants. Molecular sentences also include concepts of value (true, false), quantifiers (all, several), modal concepts (necessary, chance, possible), etc. Nature does not know negation, or incompatibility, or alternative expressed by the disjunctive *or*, by a hypothetical judgement that includes *if*; there are no classes in it, no quantifiers *one, all, several*, nor modalities such as *probable, possible,* etc. Such terms as 'sense', 'meaning', 'true', 'false' relate only to words and not to things. In nature there are *single* facts; sentences of the 'secondary language' are

therefore not expressions about facts. The sentence 'a being is mortal or immortal' contains nothing except a tautology ('a being is mortal'), since the question of the existence of an immortal being is not discussable. The sentence 'the world is finite *or* infinite' is not an expression of even partial knowledge of the world since the very possibility of this *or* depends solely on the syntactical structure of the language, i.e. has no relation to any authentic or problematical knowledge.

While natural science formulates empirically verifiable sentences, philosophy (insofar as it does not adopt the principles of neopositivism) is concerned with the purest verbalism (according to Rougier); by not delimiting 'primary' and 'secondary' languages, it confuses different linguistic systems, levels (for example, formal and physical), properties of names and properties of objects, and so on. As a consequence pseudoproblems, pseudoconcepts, and pseudostatements arise. The metaphysician, for example, ascribes the properties of objects to classes, which are specific linguistic formations and no more.

> A class [Rougier explained], by virtue of the theory of types, has none of the attributes of the individuals that constitute it: the class of mortals is not mortal, the class of sounds is not sonorous, the class of colours is not coloured, the class of numbers is not a whole number (228:201).

In that way philosophical categories arise that have no empirical content, since they are drawn from the language and not from things. All philosophical categories, Rougier suggested, which take their beginning from Parmenides, Plato, and Aristotle, are fictions without content. He classed the concepts of matter, essence, etc., as such fictions.

There is no need to demonstrate that this kind of critique of speculative philosophising has a nominalist and subjectivist character; its theoretical premiss is the neopositivist conception of philosophy as an activity whose sole goal is to clarify the sense of sentences. Dialectical materialism, in rejecting the neopositivist reduction of philosophical problems to pseudoproblems, also in this case treats the fallacy of idealism (neopositivism) as meaningful, with definite historical, psychological, theoretical, and epistemological roots.

Francis Bacon had already in his doctrine of idols criticised scholastic verbalism, which reproduced certain features of idealist speculation in general in caricature form. This speculative verbalism also exists in our day in idealist philosophy. And Rougier was basically right when he pointed out that Heidegger's word-spinning created an illusion of some other reality discovered by just this philosopher, and that the differences

between *das Seiende, das Seiend, das Seiend-sein, die Seiendheit, Unseiendes, Unsein, das Dasein, das Sosein,* and *das Anderssein,* did not correspond to actually existing differences (see 228:192). Language is the form of existence of thought; its unity with, content has a contradictory character, if only because words express merely the general. Words and sentences are therefore possible that have only an imaginary content. On the other hand, knowledge does not always find adequate expression in language, whose development is stimulated precisely by the need for such adequate expression. The epistemological roots of idealism can therefore be brought to light not only in sense perceptions, thinking, and in the process of cognition, but also in the language sphere of human activity, which is characterised by relative independence, specific structure, and patterns of functioning and development. One can agree with Fraenkel and Bar-Hillel, who maintained, from a special logico-mathematical study, that any language is

> vague and exposed to misunderstanding, even symbolic language (since mathematical and logical symbols rest on ordinary language for their interpretation). Hence mathematical language is ambiguous and defective; mathematical thought, while strict and uniform in itself, is subject to obscurity and error when transferred from one person to another by means of speaking or writing (64:213).

In contrast to Rougier's neopositivist arguments, this concrete critical comment about the nature of any language contains no subjectivist-agnostic conclusions.

Rougier's error was not that he linked a critique of philosophical fallacies with analysis of language, but rather that he reduced philosophical problems to linguistic misunderstandings. As Bertrand Russell correctly pointed out, the spokesmen of ordinary language philosophy considered the very endeavour to understand the world to be an old-fashioned whimsy. From that angle any philosophical view about the reality around man was no more than a game of words.

Neopositivism, which has made a valuable critique of speculative verbalism in several respects, has ultimately proved to be itself in thrall to verbalism, since it endeavoured to reduce, the content of philosophical doctrines to the words in which they were merely set out. Rougier treated the question of the linguistic roots of 'metaphysics' in precisely that spirit; everything boiled down to incomprehension of the nature of language, uncritical word-use, etc. The social conditioning of philosophical errors was not taken into account. So, it came about,

the difference between German and French philosophy was determined by linguistic differences.[27]

The philosophy of Marxism has put an end to the ignoring, alien to science, of such phenomena as *social* consciousness, which is conditioned by *social* being, reflects the latter, and consequently cannot be explained from itself. Thanks to the materialist conception of history philosophical comprehension of the world has been understood for the first time as a socio-historical process. The existence of idealist fallacies, which was explained once again by misconceptions, has been scientifically explained by investigating the content and development of social consciousness, which reflects historically determined social relations connected with private ownership of the means of production, class antitheses, etc.

The doctrine of the epistemological roots of idealism brings out the *possibility* of the rise of this distorted reflection of reality. It does not explain, and is not meant to explain, the *causes* of the existence of idealism. A sociological investigation of philosophical knowledge is necessary to elucidate them; and the basis of such an inquiry can only be the materialist conception of history. The communist transformation of social relations will not eliminate the epistemological roots of idealism but it will liquidate the socioeconomic sources of the idealist mystification of reality. Alienated labour will disappear and consequently the alienation of nature too. And the more society consciously guides its development, the more, Engels said,

> will men not only feel but also know their oneness with nature, and the more impossible will become the senseless and unnatural idea of a contrast between mind and matter, man and nature, soul and body, such as arose after the decline of classical antiquity in Europe and obtained its highest elaboration in Christianity (51:181).

Idealism is not eternal; this specific type of systematic errors will become the historical past, just like the religious 'assimilation' of the world. The development of knowledge will not, of course, eliminate errors and misconceptions but it will be quite capable of eliminating a world outlook based on fallacies (and to some extent is already doing so now).

4. The Dialectical-Materialist Critique of Idealism. The Principle of the Partisanship of Philosophy

Philosophical propositions, both true and false, have a sensible character, in spite of the claims of neopositivists. Under

'sense' we mean *the content of a statement*. There is no sense without a statement, i.e. without the subject's ideas or experiences definitely formulated in the ordinary or an artificial language. But there is no sense as well without content, i.e. without what refers to the object.

The preceding section was devoted to exploring the epistemological sense of idealist errors. Here I want to go into the question of the social sense of philosophical propositions. That aspect of idealist philosophising undoubtedly has a paramount place in the dialectical-materialist critique of idealism.[28]

Before Marx philosophical propositions were appraised only as true or false. While stressing the fundamental significance of that appraisal, which meets the requirements of scientific character, we still consider it unsatisfactory. The point is not just (and not so much) that many philosophical propositions cannot in general be evaluated by that two-point system, since they formulate definite hypotheses or substantiate certain social needs, but mainly, it would seem, that philosophical ideas and doctrines are powerful spiritual factors of social development. The founders of Marxism considered it necessary in principle to introduce a differentiation which did not exist before them, between progressive and reactionary philosophical conceptions, stressing its concrete, historical character, since one and the same conception may play an essentially different social role as a consequence of a change in the character of social development.

Marx and Engels were the first to begin treating the development of philosophy in connection with the historically determined structure of society, the struggle of classes, and the transition from one social formation to another. In particular, they established the existence of *bourgeois* philosophy; they called the philosophical doctrine they developed the philosophy of the proletariat. This fundamentally new approach to the analysis of philosophical doctrines is one of the most important propositions of historical materialism.

Marxism demonstrated the scientific flimsiness of the idealist conception of philosophical knowledge standing above history, explored the historical roots of the metaphysical opposing of philosophy to social practice, and substantiated the principle of the partisanship of philosophy as a scientific methodological principle of the study of its changing social content. Thanks to the Marxist history of philosophy it became understandable, for the first time, that the traditional conception of a philosophy being above any party allegiance was a fallacy that could only be properly understood as a reflection of historically transient

features of the development of philosophy, an unscientific reflection, without doubt, since it did not draw a line between the appearance or semblance and the essence of philosophic knowledge.

If philosophers were convinced for centuries that their doctrines were above party, one may well ask what did they have in mind? Doesn't the term 'above party' indicate (indirectly, of course) some essential feature of philosophy that has nothing in common, however, with being above party? Doesn't it turn out, thus, that this term (and the content associated with it) is an inadequate characterisation of the real status of philosophy?

The idea of philosophy being above party, which was defended by the great philosophers, cannot simply be a fiction without content, although the idea undoubtedly concealed hypocrisy, servility, subordination to political reaction, and indifference to the sufferings and struggle of the oppressed and exploited. The conception of philosophy being above party, in short, deserves exploration as a phenomenon of social consciousness; this false idea is more than simply prejudice or a semantic misunderstanding.

Philosophy arose as theoretical knowledge; its distinguishing feature was 'uselessness', the reasons for which lay both in the undeveloped character of theory and the limited character of social practice. It was often therefore characterised as knowledge for the sake of knowledge, and not for the sake of anything useful. Aristotle said of it: 'all the sciences, indeed, are more necessary than this, but none is better' (8:501). The forming of that attitude to knowledge was an important landmark in mankind's intellectual development. Denial of a link between philosophy and non-philosophical needs and interests was clearly a source of the idealist notion of its being above party.

We know, however, that Greek philosophers often took an active part in the political struggle of their time. They usually remained, however, *theoreticians* who endeavoured not so much to cope with certain current political problems as to develop a definite social-political ideal. That stance, not directly linked with topics of the day, seemed above party since it differed from the particular positions of the separate factions of the ruling class.

Aristotle was an ideologist of the ruling class of a slave-owning society. He belonged to the Macedonian party, but the special interests of the party could not find reflection in his philosophy. The interests of any one class, for example the bourgeoisie, find reflection in the political activity of several parties, the differences

between which are secondary, as a rule, despite the fact that they may carry on a fierce struggle for power with one another to implement their private political ends. And the fact that a philosopher reflecting the radical interests of that class rises above its separate factions seems on the surface to be a rejection of parly position. But if he, on the contrary, is a representative of one of these factions, that gives grounds for asserting that, as a spokesman of it, he is not, strictly speaking, a philosopher, since a philosopher as the creator of a philosophical doctrine cannot be an adherent or opponent, for example, of the corn laws defended by the Tories in the early nineteenth century.[29]

If the doctrine of the Eleatics about being, for example, or the Pythagorean theory of numbers, was independent of the political line that supporters of those doctrines pursued, statement of the fact can suggest the idea that philosophers' sociopolitical views are only outwardly related to their basic teaching, and that these views occur in general insofar as the philosopher remains a person, yields to the influence of various circumstances, and adopts an 'unphilosophic' stance.

According to Hegel philosophy was above party because the 'absolute spirit' philosophised in the form of a human. That may appear a kind of ontological justification of the idea of the above-party character of philosophy, but closer analysis incidentally shows, rather that it substantiates something else, viz., the need for a scientifically objective investigation excluding subjective arbitrariness. 'To that end,' Hegel wrote, 'there is required an effort to keep back the incessant impertinence of our own fancies and private opinions' (86:294). Observance of that requirement, however, does not in the least exclude a social direction of philosophy. Hegel himself also understood that to some extent, in spite of his absolutising of philosophical consciousness. He ridiculed, for example, the demand that 'the historian should proceed with *impartiality*' (87:277). In particular, that requirement (he wrote) was

> often and especially made on the *history of philosophy:* where it is insisted there should be no prepossession in favour of an idea or opinion, just as a judge should have no special sympathy for one of the contending parties. In the case of the judge it is at the same time assumed that he would administer his office ill and foolishly, if he had not an interest, and an exclusive interest in justice, if he had not that for his aim and one sole aim, or if he declined to judge at all. This requirement which we may make upon the judge may be called *partiality* for justice; and there is no difficulty here in distinguishing it from *subjective* partiality. But in speaking of the impartiality required from the historian, this self-satisfied insipid chatter lets the distinction disappear, and rejects both kinds of interest (87:277).

Hegel counterposed real partiality, which proceeds from and is guided by the objective, to the arbitrary will of the subject, 'subjective partiality'. He thus distinguished between personal and social interests. A genuine scholar is always above any personal interests; he dismisses them, ignoring them for the sake of the interests of the matter. But the same scholar cannot, and in essence does not, wish to be above social interests; he is consciously guided by them to the extent that he is aware of them and recognises their necessity.

Bourgeois scholars as a rule treat the idea of the partiality or partisanship of philosophy (and of the social sciences in general) as something foreign to science, imposed on it from outside. The fact that this idea had already been expressed by Hegel, and to some extent by other outstanding thinkers, too, is usually passed over in silence. The idea of partiality is thus passed off as an 'invention' of Marxism that breaks completely with the traditions of science. The Marxist doctrine of the partisanship of philosophy is in fact a theoretical grasping of the course of the history of philosophy that could not be made by pre-Marxian philosophers, primarily because they all clung to an idealist understanding of history. They made social being dependent upon social consciousness. The question of the reflection of the socio-historical process in philosophical consciousness was excluded in fact from scientific examination.[30]

The fathers of Marxism explored the historical course of the moulding of bourgeois philosophy as a reflection of the forming of the capitalist social system, and of the struggle of the bourgeoisie and the whole third estate against the dominant feudal relations and the religious ideology that corresponded to them. The materialist conception of history not only interpreted the development of philosophical ideas in a new way but also showed how the bourgeois character of the social transformations conditioned the idealist conception of the above-party character of philosophy.

The bourgeois revolutions signified victory of the new social system over feudal provincialism, separatism, particularism, corporations, caste privileges, etc. The formation of nations in the modern sense, the liquidation of feudal exclusiveness, the progressing development of economic relations, the forming of centralised states, and the founding of bourgeois-democratic institutions all had their ideological expression in the bourgeois idea of the *common* good as the moral basis of the goal-oriented community of people. In eighteenth-century bourgeois ideology this idea was formulated as an axiomatically obvious con-

viction that the common, highest interests of the nation were higher than any particular, vested interests of either separate members of society or of big social groups and classes. The general national upsurge, and bourgeois-democratic illusions, undoubtedly encouraged not only bourgeois politicians but also spokesmen of the then proletariat to categorically counterpose the idea of the unity of the nation to the idea of partisanship. During the Great French Revolution the proletariat of Rheims sent the spinner Jean-Baptiste Armonville to the Convention; he preached 'anarchy and agrarian law' at meetings of the people, for which bourgeois contemporaries called him, no less, the 'ringleader of the Rheims rabble'. This proletarian of the eighteenth century accused the bourgeoisie of 'unwise partiality', opposing it by a striving for the 'common good' and 'ardent patriotism' that did not suffer any partisanship that infringed the validity of fraternity and rational freedom, encroaching on reason, fairness, and justice (see 134; cited from the Russian translation of 1925, pp. 24, 27).

Such was the historical situation that gave the idea of impartiality an anti-feudal sense, so veiling its bourgeois content, incompatible with the interests of the working people. The same anti-feudal edge and enlightenment illusions about the real essence of the bourgeois reforms strengthened the appearance of being above party inherent in philosophy. The convictions of bourgeois philosophers associated with that appearance were not hypocrisy but fallacy, were the ideological form in which the bourgeoisie understood its historically limited goals as having world-historical importance.[31]

The founders of bourgeois philosophy proclaimed, as a counter to the mediaeval tradition, that the sole principle that philosophy and science should conform to was that of truth independent of any authority. Any view, belief, or moral, political, religious, and other considerations and interests should reverence the truth because there was nothing higher than it. The cult of truth, which was shared equally by rationalists and adherents of empiricism, was directly realised as the principle of being above party, but was essentially the *party* position of the progressive bourgeoisie. 'Impartiality' meant, then, denial of *feudal partiality*. But since the party character of this denial could not be realised from the stance of the politically still undivided third estate, it took the illusory form of a denial of partiality in general. Jonathan Swift wrote: 'I meddle not the least with any *Party,* but write without Passion, Prejudice, or Ill-will against any Man or Number of Men what-soever' (253:277).

But the bourgeoisie of that time was really fighting for science against religion, for progress against feudal reaction, for truth against what had been proclaimed as truth only because it accorded with authority, tradition and power (lay or clerical).

The ideologists of the bourgeoisie condemned partiality from the standpoint of an unconscious partiality as a manifestation of selfishness, subjectivity, and particularism, which were completely incompatible with the unconditional universality of truth.[32] Lenin disclosed the deep social roots of this historically inevitable and progressive 'impartiality' in his article 'The Socialist Party and Non-Party Revolutionism', in which he demonstrated that the bourgeois revolution, insofar as it was overthrowing the feudal system and 'thereby putting into effect the demands of all the classes of bourgeois society', inevitably revealed itself 'in the ''popular", at first glance non-class, nature of the struggle of all classes of a bourgeois society against autocracy and feudalism' (146:76). The specific feature of a bourgeois revolution, he explained, was that the whole social movement acquired an appearance of non-partisanship.

> The urge for a 'human', civilised life, (he urge to organise in defence of human dignity, for one's rights as man and citizen, takes hold of everyone, unites all classes, vastly outgrows all party bounds and shakes up people who as yet are very far from being able to rise to party allegiance (146:77).

This specific feature of a bourgeois revolution emerges all the more in philosophy as an appearance of impartiality since philosophy is removed from the economic basis of society more than any other form of social consciousness.

The consolidation of the capitalist system gave bourgeois philosophy a conservative, protective character, with the consequence that the ideal of impartiality, which had previously been directly aimed against feudal reaction, was now opposed to the class demands of the proletariat, which were morally condemned as a corporate position incompatible with the interests of society as a whole. The development of capitalist society's antagonistic contradictions necessarily alters the specific, historical content of the appearance of impartiality. Let me cite an example. In the mid-nineteenth century Comte, the founder of 'sober', 'scientific', positivist philosophy, convinced the French proletariat that

> true happiness has no necessary connection with wealth; that it depends far more on free play being given to their intellectual, moral, and social qualities... They will cease to aspire to the enjoyments of wealth and power (37:418-419).

This example shows that bourgeois 'impartiality', a form of struggle against reactionary forces and traditions historically inevitable in the age of the assault on feudalism, has naturally been transformed into the hypocrisy of a semi-official or non-official apology for capitalism. It was to that kind of 'impartiality' that Lenin's profound, wrathful words referred when he said:

> the non-party principle in bourgeois society is merely a hypocritical, disguised, passive expression of adherence to the party of the well-fed, of the rulers, of the exploiters (146:79).[33]

The principle of the partiality of philosophy, like that of any social knowledge, is thus a necessary conclusion from the materialist understanding of *social* consciousness. Attempts to isolate philosophy from other forms of social consciousness as a special domain of pure, uninterested contemplation do not *stand* up to criticism. An appearance of impartiality is essentially inherent in all forms of prevailing bourgeois ideology. The bourgeois legal consciousness is an illusory consciousness of the natural justice and fairness of the relations existing between labour and capital, since they are of a 'voluntary' character. Application of one yardstick to unequal people is perceived by the man of capitalist society as the principle of equality of all citizens before the law. Marxism exposed the semblance of law being above party, showing that it was the will of the dominant class raised to a law. The character of this law is determined in no small degree by the resistance put up by the exploited to the exploiting class. That, too, helps preserve the illusion that the law prevailing in bourgeois society expresses the interests of all.

An appearance of being above party is likewise inherent in bourgeois morality; it proclaims its copybook maxims to be eternal, invariant norms of interpersonal relations. But the actual interpersonal relations in bourgeois society are directly opposed to the generally proclaimed and substantiated maxims. And these actual, unwritten morals have a class, party character by virtue of which man's attitude to man in the conditions of capitalist society is largely determined by what class or social group an individual belongs to.

Religion has an appearance, even greater than philosophy, of being impartial under the capitalist system. The struggling classes usually profess the same religion, and they acquire a seeming unity in it, and religion precisely aspires to it in order to reconcile the opposing classes, whose struggle under advanced capitalism usually lacks a religious disguise. But 'above-party' religion inculcates submissiveness and patience in the oppres-

sed and exploited; it also gives their protest against the dominant social relations a mitigated, conformist character. The Marxian critique of bourgeois philosophy, bourgeois religion, bourgeois law, etc., is above all an unmasking of its intrinsic appearance of being above class and above party, which is generated not only by the history of capitalist production but also by the inner objective patterns of its functioning. The Marxist theory of class struggle scientifically explains why bourgeois ideology preaches the idea of impartiality, and why socialist ideology is a negation of this false idea, which reflects only appearance.

Lenin wrote:

> The most purposeful, most comprehensive and specific expression of the political struggle of classes is the struggle of parties. The non-party principle means indifference to the struggle of parties... Hence, in practice, indifference to the struggle does not at all mean standing aloof from the struggle, abstaining from it, or being neutral. Indifference is tacit support of the strong, of those who rule (146:79).

And he drew a conclusion of immense principled significance, to wit, impartiality is a bourgeois idea, partisanship a socialist one.

Bourgeois philosophers often express the opinion that philosophy differs from other forms of knowledge in its disinterestedness in coping with practical tasks, its striving in the realm of pure theory, unconnected with practice and the stormy worldly sea, and in intellectual independence from everything that is acknowledged and sanctified by every kind of authority. In the 1840s the Young Hegelian Max Stirner formulated this philosophical illusion as follows: 'A philosopher is only such who sees heaven in the world, the heavenly in the earthly, and the divine in the worldly, and proves or demonstrates it' (250:87). In *The German Ideology* Marx and Engels ridiculed this illusion of alienated philosophical consciousness, which in effect reconciled itself with all that exists, since the latter was claimed to be foreign to philosophy. Stirner was a lower middle-class ideologist, and his notion of the unworldly essence of philosophy reflected in a way the indefinite position of that class group.

In our day attempts of that kind to understand philosophy as thinking remote from everything that affects in one way or other non-philosophical consciousness, are no less common than in the last century. The Belgian philosopher Flam, for instance, starting from the thesis that philosophical thought was universal and that it existed only as 'free thought' and was identical in essence with it, concluded that

> philosophy should serve no one, neither theology nor science, and not a social movement. To demand that a philosopher serve a social movement is to make him cease to be a philosopher (61:167).

These statements clearly illustrate the irreconcilable opposition between the philosophy of Marxism and bourgeois, illusorily impartial philosophy.[34]

Bourgeois critics of the idea of the partisanship of social knowledge treat the party position in the realm of theory as bias, prejudice, a predilection for dogma, an incapacity for independent tackling of questions and critical analysis of one's own convictions, and absence of a readiness to learn from the differently minded, to listen to the arguments of the opposite side, and to evaluate the state of affairs calmly and without bias. Partisanship is depicted as an obsession amounting sometimes to fanaticism, as a conviction whose premiss is disagreement with all possible opponents, but at the same time as a constant readiness to agree with their assertions when they themselves repudiate them. Many bourgeois philosophers, sociologists, or simply specialists in the 'critique' of Marxism, claim that all matters are decided in advance for the partisan person, and that all his convictions are no more than suggestions from outside, because such a person has no intellectual or moral independence.

The bourgeois critic of partisanship, of course, claims that it is inherent only in Marxism. And that evaluation of Marxism as a doctrine that ignores truth for the sake of partisanship is fobbed off as impartial and unbiassed. There is no need to demonstrate that such an interpretation of Marxism is highly partial, and precisely in the bourgeois sense, i.e. foreign to objectivity. Marxism and, consequently, the philosophy of Marxism adopt a partisan position since they do not lay claim to the role of arbiter in the historical battle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, and come out directly on the side of the working class and all who are oppressed and exploited. This partisan position is naturally evaluated by the apologists of capitalism as prejudice and subjectivity, since that is how the bourgeoisie appraises the class demands of the proletariat.

In theory the bourgeois ideologist usually finds a counterbalance to partisanship in objectivism understood as alien to a subjective approach to the investigative task. But objectivism, interpreted as a denial of partisanship, has nothing in common with real scientific objectivity. It is a one-sided and therefore subjectivist statement of definite objective tendencies but at the same time an ignoring of the opposite tendencies whose action alters the course of the process that the objectivist claims to be

giving a rigorously scientific description of. The objectivist consequently ignores such a supremely essential component of the socio-historical process as the subjective factor. As Chagin correctly notes, the latter is

> the forces of consciousness that man, social groups, classes, nations, and parties put into action. These forces of consciousness are transformed in the course of practice into material forces and affect the reality around man through practice, altering and transforming it (33:3).

Engels criticised 'that self-complacent "objectivity" which sees no further than its nose and precisely for that reason amounts to the most narrow-minded subjectivity' (180:327). Lenin subjected Struve's objectivism to systematic criticism; the latter flirted with Marxism and depicted it as a doctrine of insuperable tendencies of social development that came about independently of the activity of people, classes, parties, etc. Objective historical necessity, Lenin explained, rejecting Struve's 'objectivism' existed, changed and was realised by the activity of classes and parties and to the extent of their social activity. The realisation of historical necessity is not an unambiguous process; its character is conditioned by what class is 'managing' it. Thus bourgeois objectivism, by its social content, turns to be sophisticated bourgeois partisanship, and theoretically a version of the fatalistic conception of the course of history that ignores the dialectical interpenetration of subjective and objective internally inherent in it.

Marx, characterising the views of Ricardo, stressed that the outstanding economist was a conscious defender of the interests of the bourgeoisie. But since he defended the real needs of social development his partisan position did not in the least contradict the aspiration for truth natural to any genuine scholar. And Marx noted that Ricardo's inquiries were distinguished by 'scientific impartiality and love of truth' (see 167:1, 412). A contradiction between partisanship and scientific objectivity arises only when the scholar scorns the real needs of social development; in that case, however, he also betrays scientific objectivity. The genuine scientist and investigator adopts a definite partisan position not in spite of his research activity or irrespective of it, but precisely because he consistently develops the truths established by him. In his remembrances of Marx, Paul Lafargue characterised the latter's path to proletarian partisanship as follows:

> He did not come to the Communist standpoint through sentimental considerations, although he had a profound sympathy for the sufferings of the working class, but through study of history and political

> economy; he claimed that any impartial spirit who was not influenced by private interests and not blinded by class prejudices must necessarily come to such conclusions (131:11).

Proletarian, Communist partisanship was thus integrally linked, for Marx, with tireless search for truth, and with a most resolute rejection of bourgeois dogmas, ordinary notions, and prejudices.

The real explorer of the social process, precisely because of his inquiry, is aware of the need for a definite stand in the fight between progressive and reactionary social forces. It was that, seemingly, that Engels had in mind when he pointed out that Marxism was winning supporters 'in every country which contains on the one hand proletarians and on the other undaunted scientific theoreticians' (50:13).

It seems particularly shocking for the upholders of hypocritical bourgeois 'impartiality' that Marxism regards philosophy (this speculative science!) as partisan and criticises contemporary idealist doctrines as supporting the capitalist system. Bocheński, who snubbed dialectical materialism literally as a diabolical delusion, nevertheless claimed that 'the philosopher will feel even less the need for victory in a contest... He is always prepared to abandon his own views if he finds that the other person's ideas are more correct' (17:178). But being conscious, seemingly, that such an unctious argument was too contradictory to the facts, he tacked on: 'Of course, we are all men' (*ibid.*). The philosopher's social position was thus explained simply as human weakness. That imaginary indifference to the struggle of classes in bourgeois society signified support of the dominant exploiting class. And the more a bourgeois philosopher shares the illusion of indestructibility of capitalist relations, the further his philosophy is from socio-political reality and its violent and often tragic collisions.[35]

However surprising it is at first glance, the illusory notion of the eternal character of capitalism still survives in the consciousness of a considerable mass of people in bourgeois society, including its ideologists. But capitalist reality constantly dispels the illusion. In the middle of the nineteenth century the most far-seeing bourgeois ideologists were already faced with a need to concern themselves with comprehending class antagonisms instead of simply ignoring them. Alongside the traditional notions of philosophy being above party a new conception was taking shape, viz., that there could not be impartial judgements on matters that affected the interests of people.

> If the proposition of the square of the hypotenuse [Taine wrote] had shocked out mental habits, we would very quickly have refuted it. If we had a need to believe that crocodiles were gods, a temple would be raised to them tomorrow on the Place du Carrousel (254:290).

Those words were not only recognition of the dependence of a certain kind of judgement on human needs but also a relativist-subjectivist denial of the possibility of objective truth in judgments of that kind. Thinkers who claimed that philosophy was above party supposed that any manifestation of partisanship in it meant rejection of a selfless search for truth. That was precisely how Taine interpreted partisanship, with the difference only that he excluded the possibility of impartial social knowledge; philosophers in general did not differ much from other people, they had the same passions, beliefs, and subjective predispositions. 'Their opinions are sentiments, their beliefs passions, their faith is their life' (254:208).

So, while disputing the traditional conception of philosophy being above party, he shared the notions of its supporters about the consequences of partisanship, which seemed to him to be disastrous. The subsequent development of bourgeois philosophy in conditions of sharpening class struggle encouraged a consolidation of this tendency to recognise the partisanship of philosophy and a striving to link philosophy directly with bourgeois politics. Taine's contemporary Nietzsche, for whom a presentiment of the future bitterness of class battles was characteristic, derided the traditional notion of speculative philosophising, which had no marked effect on mankind's history.

> How I understand the philosopher—as a terrible explosive, endangering everything—how my concept of the philosopher is worlds removed from any concept that would include even a Kant, not to speak of academic 'ruminants' and other professors of philosophy—this essay gives inestimable information about that... (196:281).

Bourgeois philosophers of the pre-imperialist age openly acknowledged through Nietzsche that the struggle of philosophical ideas was not some sort of show that could be watched with dispassionate gaze; willy-nilly, consciously or unconsciously, we were involved in it.

Everyone takes a stance in the struggle of ideologies either for or against, but the philosopher differs indeed from the non-philosopher in ideologically substantiating, formulating, and defending a definite social position. Man accepts that water consists of hydrogen and oxygen, and not of other elements, without protest or approval, simply as fact. But he is far from indifferent to what philosophy says about the material and im-

material, about body and soul, about the world around us, about the future of the human race, and even about its past. 'Objectivity and objectivism must not be confused', the French irrationalist Boutroux declared (22:427). His words were close to Nietzsche's statements, and at the same time went further. He opposed objectivity to objectivism. His critique of objectivism was very far from scientism and was aimed, moreover, against it. Objectivism, he claimed, was the realm of scientific research, which eliminated man's relation to the object even when the object was man himself. Objectivity, in contrast, was alien to science and formed a specific achievement of philosophy, which included the human relation to the object of knowledge in all its judgements. Philosophical objectivity thus came close to 'natural' human subjectivity, which was opposed to the soulless objectivism of scientific knowledge. So a revision of the traditional conception of the above-party character of philosophy began.

It was not so far from Boutroux to existentialism, which defines scientific truths as impersonal, and philosophy as an interested, personal view of things, above all of human reality. Heidegger, for instance, though he did not speak of the above-party nature of philosophy, argued about the 'mood of thinking' which was fully reserved in pure speculation, free of sensuous urges or interests.

> It often seems [he wrote] from outside as if thought were completely free of any mood by virtue of its rational notions and calculations. But both the coldness of computation and the prosaic sobriety of a project are a characteristic of certainty. Not only that; even the reason that holds itself to be free of all influences of passion is disposed as such to confidence in the logico-mathematical judiciousness of its principles and rules (95:43).

While Heidegger confined himself to recognition of the dependence of thinking on subjective factors independent of it, Jaspers went further. In his *Autobiography* he claimed that it was politics that helped deepen philosophical understanding: 'only with my emotional development by politics did my philosophy come to full consciousness' (112:57). And, generalising the conclusion drawn from his own intellectual biography, he categorically declared: 'There is no philosophy without politics and without political conclusions (112:56).

A third major spokesman of existentialism, Jean-Paul Sartre, tried to grasp the opposition of the main philosophical trends on the social plane.

> A feature of idealism that particularly offends revolutionaries [he

> wrote] is the tendency to represent the changes of the world as governed by ideas, or better still as changes in ideas (237:210).

In contrast to idealism, materialism was an 'active weapon' in Sartre's conviction. That was not, he declared, a whim of intellectuals or a mistake of philosophers; 'today materialism is the philosophy of the proletariat to the exact extent that the proletariat is revolutionary' (237:174). Sartre, incidentally, did not link the revolutionary significance of materialism with the objective truth contained in it; it was 'the *sole myth* (my italics—*T.O.*) that meets revolutionary demands' (237:175).

We can thus state that the idealist conception of philosophy being above party has been revised to some extent by bourgeois philosophers themselves, who argue more and more often in our day about the inevitable 'involvement' of philosophy. Isn't that evidence that they are coming close to recognition and understanding of the correctness of the Marxian conception? Of course not. Even those who directly link philosophy with politics by no means consider themselves *bourgeois* philosophers, i.e. they suppose they are outside parties. Their vulgar, subjectivist interpretation of the partisanship of philosophy is drawn from the bourgeois idealist sociology of knowledge.

The sociology of knowledge, which has taken shape under the undoubted influence of historical materialism, but at the same time in struggle against it, rejects the traditional requirement of a radical elimination of a value orientation from the science of society, which was systematically substantiated by Weber back at the beginning of this century.[36] This requirement is now explained as out-of-date, impracticable, and even dangerous; it both disorientates and ideologically disarms sociology. Gunnar Myrdal, for instance, wrote:

> There is no way of studying social reality other than from the standpoint of human ideals. A 'disinterested social science' has never existed and, for logical reasons, cannot exist. The value connotation of our main concepts represents our interest in a matter, gives direction to our thoughts and significance to our inferences. It poses the questions without which there are no answers (188:1).

Bourgeois sociology is also beginning to recognise such quite banal truths as that objectivity and neutrality are not the same thing. But the whole point is that a value orientation or 'feeling of fidelity' is mainly characterised as a property inherent in the personality of the researcher. The question of the social interests that got expression in sociological or philosophical theories is left out of account as before.

Ideology has become a subject of special study for contem-

porary bourgeois philosophers and sociologists. Its significance is stressed in every way, and the ideological intentions of social research are being disclosed by sociologists, Some see in them an unavoidable evil, the ineradicable presence of a subjective, human element. Others are ready to examine ideological intentions, as well, as something positive, at least in certain conditions. But no contemporary bourgeois researcher considers himself an ideologist. None of them, as will readily be understood, considers himself a *bourgeois* theoretician. This halfway stance shows that bourgeois thinkers are incapable of ending the myth of the above-party character of philosophy and social knowledge in general. Such is the nature of bourgeois partisanship; it cannot help *donning* the toga of impartiality. A vague consciousness that bourgeois partisanship is essentially antipeople finds expression in that fact. The bourgeois ideologist inevitably counterposes partisanship and scientific character to one another. This theoretical position reflects the real antithesis between *bourgeois* partisanship and scientism. Marxian partisanship, on the contrary, is distinguished by its constant link with scientism. In substantiating the principle of partisanship Marx wrote as follows:

> But when a man seeks to *accommodate* science to a viewpoint which is derived not from science itself (however erroneous it may be) but from *outside, from alien, external interests*, then I call him '*base*' (176:119).

Bourgeois vulgarisers of the Marxist principle of partisanship of course do not understand that statement of Marx's. They see in it—retreat from the principle of partisanship and so demonstrate their incapacity to understand this great scientific principle.

Exploration of the phenomenon of the partisanship of philosophy does not, of course, boil down to bringing out its social content and direction; in that respect, as I stressed above, philosophy does not differ from other forms of social consciousness. But philosophy is a specific form of cognition. As for its content, it relates, as we know, not only to social but also to natural reality, and that, in particular, determines its special place in the system of sciences of nature on the one hand and of society on the other.

When a philosopher expresses his opinion on social and political matters, his party position does not differ in principle from that of the sociologist, historian, or economist. Philosophical judgements, it is true, have a more general, abstract character than those of the economist or historian, but this

difference cannot be taken into consideration in this case although it presents a possibility of interpreting philosophers' socio-political statements in different ways. The point that interests me here is something else. Since epistemological and ontological conceptions form the most important content of philosophy, the point is the following: how far are the socio-political ideas expressed by philosophers connected with their ontological and epistemological conceptions? Do they include (of course implicitly) a certain social bias?

One needs to specify immediately that there cannot be an unambiguous answer to these questions, since the degree of dependence of some opinion on others differs. Plato's social utopia theoretically comprehended a certain historical experience. It would be a departure from materialism to consider it simply as a theoretical inference from the doctrine of transcendent ideas. But it would be no less mistaken to ignore the real link of the Platonic theory of the state with the doctrine of immutable ideas of justice, truth, and the beautiful, which, according to Plato, determined this-worldly life. The ideal state about which Plato wrote was conceived as the happy outcome of mankind's misadventures through the establishment of a perfect social set-up. The doctrine of transcendent ideas substantiated and justified this social ideal.

The attempt to establish a unity between Berkeley's economic views and his philosophy was hardly crowned with success. But his economic and philosophical views obviously had certain common features that stemmed from his empirical nominalism. That was displayed, for example, in his theory of money.

Materialists and idealists, rationalists and empiricists developed a theory of natural law. The divergences in the views of Hobbes and Rousseau, Spinoza and Locke on the origin and essence of the state (they were all, we know, supporters of the theory of natural law), are irreducible to philosophical disagreements between them. It is evidence simply that philosophers' socio-political conceptions must not be regarded as logical inferences from their doctrines of the world and knowledge. It would be even more mistaken to try and deduce the ontological and epistemological views of philosophers from their socio-political convictions. Something else is required in order to understand the relation between these views: though not directly connected they supplement one another in some way within the context of a single philosophical theory, materialist or idealist, rationalist or empiricist.

The philosophical doctrine of elements (water, air, fire, and earth) arose in antiquity and existed until the end of the eighteenth century. It would be a concession to vulgar sociologism to regard that conception as a reflection of social being and a historically determined social structure. And that does not apply just to the doctrine of elements; epistemological and ontological ideas in general directly lack social colouring. An inference that philosophy is above party, however, does not follow from that fact, but rather a scientific understanding of the role of *interpretation* in bringing out the social sense (partisanship) of philosophical ideas.

Locke claimed (not without grounds) that the theory of innate ideas served tyranny (see 152:55, 56). With Plato it substantiated natural inequality between people, i.e. had an aristocratic character. Locke was not right, however, since he spoke of the social tendency of the theory without allowing for the possibility of another interpretation, a possibility that had already come to light in his day. According to Descartes' doctrine, the original ideas of human reason, from which the whole aggregate of theoretical knowledge could be deduced, were equally inborn in all people and constituted what was usually called common sense (*bon sens*), and no one, of course, complained of a deficiency of it. This interpretation had an essentially democratic character. Locke's doctrine of experience, according to which there were no innate ideas (which was the philosophical antithesis of Descartes' doctrine) expressed the same bourgeois-democratic tendency in the social respect. In the doctrine of the French eighteenth-century materialists sensualism philosophically substantiated a bourgeois-humanist outlook. But that same materialist sensualism was the philosophical basis of the Utopian communism of Mably, Dézamy, and their followers.

Seventeenth-century rationalism, which proclaimed human reason an all-powerful capacity for knowing, had an essentially anti-theological and (in those historical conditions) an undoubtedly anti-feudal character, in spite of the inconsistency of its outstanding spokesmen, who endeavoured to employ a rationalist epistemology to solve theological problems. The empirical materialists who polemicised against the rationalists, developed the same anti-theological, anti-feudal social programme, but the idealist interpretation of empiricism in Berkeley's philosophy was substantiation of a compromise with feudal ideology.

Kant tried to reconcile rationalism with empiricism, a stance

that made it possible, as his doctrine showed, to develop a bourgeois-democratic outlook. But Fichte's rationalism promoted the same task even better.

Feuerbach's materialist anthropologism was a doctrine of the natural equality of all men and a radically democratic denial of feudal ideological prejudices. The Marxian denial of anthropologism, i.e. its understanding of human essence as an aggregate of historically determined social relations, is a philosophical substantiation of the objective need for class struggle in order to achieve real social equality.

Carlyle's doctrine of 'heroes' and the 'mob' was an ideology of feudal-romantic reaction. The Young Hegelians, who continued that doctrine, interpreted it in the spirit of bourgeois radicalism. The Russian Populists (members of the People's Freedom Party) turned this doctrine into a revolutionary call to the lower middle-class intelligentsia: viz., to become heroes so as to awaken and lead the people.

There is no need to multiply examples to illusrate that the social sense of epistemological and ontological ideas are inseparable from their interpretation, an interpretation, moreover, that links them with certain socio-political propositions. Only on that condition does any philosophical proposition acquire social content in the context of one system of views or another, and in that sense becomes a party point of view.

So far I have talked of partisanship as a social position in theory or a certain interpretation of epistemological and ontological ideas. A third aspect specially characterising philosophy is the consistent following and defence of a principled line, and unswerving adherence to the main principles of a philosophical theory, whether materialist or idealist. From that point of view it presupposes a clear demarcation of mutually exclusive trends, a consistent counterposing of the defended trend to the opposite one, a distinct consciousness of the unprincipled character (and hopelessness) of combining materialism and idealism, and struggle against attempts to reconcile these main philosophical trends. That determines one of the most important aspects of the dialectical-materialist critique of eclecticism and all possible attempts to transcend the allegedly obsolete antithesis of materialism and idealism.

Marx had already, in 1843, i.e. when he had just reached the position of dialectical materialism, profoundly realised the fundamental flimsiness of the doctrines that laid claim to the 'highest' synthesis, i.e. the uniting of mutually exclusive propositions. From these positions he criticised the late Schelling:

> To the French romantics and mystics he cries: 'I, the union of philosophy and theology', to the French materialists: 'I, the union of flesh and idea', to the French sceptics: 'I, the destroyer of dogmatism' (172: :350).

Lenin, highly valuing this partisan philosophical position of the young Marx, stressed:

> this refusal to recognise the hybrid projects for reconciling materialism and idealism constitutes the great merit of Marx, who moved *forward* along a sharply-defined philosophical road (142:317).

I have already referred to philosophical eclecticism above; in the light of the Marxist doctrine of the partisanship of philosophy, it makes a claim to a position of impartiality in the struggle of the main trends. Eclecticism, which is not, of course, a view above party, is always ready to see one-sidedness, an incapacity for ideological communication and dogmatism in philosophical partisanship, consistency, and adherence to principle. But the antithesis between materialism and idealism differs radically from the opposition of one-sided views actually occurring in science and philosophy. In the dispute between determinist and indeterminist metaphysicians, for instance, both parties defended one-sided views. The former argued that necessity was universal and freedom impossible; the latter substantiated the existence of undetermined freedom. These one-sided conceptions were overcome by a dialectical posing of the problem, which brought out the unity of freedom and determination.

The rationalist and empiricist philosophical doctrines were the same one-sided antithesis. We are now well aware what the rationalists were right in, and what their opponents. The one-sided antithesis between epistemological rationalism and empiricist epistemology was not removed, however, by reconciling them, but by a new understanding of the relation of the theoretical and empirical. The point of departure for overcoming this one-sided antithesis was a dialectical development of materialist sensualism.

The antithesis of materialism and idealism differs in principle from that kind of opposition. To employ Marx's words characterising the relation of mutually exclusive opposites, one can say that materialism and idealism

> do not need each other, they do not supplement each other. The one does not have in its own bosom the longing for, the need for, the anticipation of the other (168:88).

This antithesis thus embraces the whole aggregate of philosophical questions. The materialist does not enrich but, on the con-

trary, impoverishes his doctrine when he includes idealist propositions in it. The idealist does not overcome his basic fallacy by adopting separate materialist propositions (as Mach did). The fact that materialism and idealism usually discuss one and the same philosophical problems does not mitigate the contradiction existing between them but on the contrary increases it. This antithesis of the main philosophical trends is further strengthened by there being no third road, at least for consistent philosophers.

> The genius of Marx and Engels [Lenin wrote] lies precisely in the fact that during a very long period, *nearly half a century*, they developed materialism, further advanced one fundamental trend in philosophy (142:315).

This consistency, branded as one-sidedness by eclectics, is the genuine road of scientific research.

Those who take fallacy for truth of course reproach their opponents who reject their fallacy with one-sidedness, intolerance and incommunicability. Those who defend the truth also happen to fad into errors, of course, but that is not evidence of compromise. The demarcation of opposing views, a clear delimitation of different points of view, consistent following of principle, and the impermissibility of mixing and confusing views that do not agree with one another, all these are requirements of rigorous scientific character and at the same time Marxist demands of philosophy's partisanship.

The counterposing of partisanship and scientism so characteristic of bourgeois writers expresses the basic features of bourgeois ideology, which by its very nature is unscientific. And when a bourgeois ideologist talks of the unscientific character of any ideology, he is only making a norm of the essence of his own ideology. That is typical subjectivism. The philosophy of Marxism substantiates the principle of the unity of partisanship and scientific character. 'The more ruthlessly and disinterestedly science proceeds,' Engels said, 'the more it finds itself in harmony with the interests and aspirations of the workers' (52 : :376).

Philosophy cannot be treated as partly partisan or partisan in the part of it devoted to social matters. The partisanship of philosophy is its social inspiration and the specific historical trend that determines its whole content and manifests itself in the posing and solution of all problems. A desire to pursue the principle of partisanship in philosophy is quite insufficient; a deep understanding of its social and epistemological content, and of the specific method of its scientific application in various

fields of philosophical knowledge (and not just philosophical) is also required. As is stated in the Programme of the CPSU (1986):

> Socialism has given Soviet society's intellectual and cultural life a scientific world outlook based on Marxism-Leninism, which is an integral and harmonious system of philosophical, economic and socio-political views. The Party considers it its most important duty to continue creatively developing Marxist-Leninist theory of studying and generalising new phenomena in Soviet society, taking into account the experience of other countries of the socialist community and the world communist, working-class, national liberation and democratic movements and analysing the progress in the natural, technical and social sciences (217 : 56).

Strengthening of the unity of various sciences presupposes a profound mastering of the Marxist-Leninist dialectical-materialist methodology of scientific thought, the sole reliable instrument for cognising society and nature. All that directly witnesses to the growing role of the philosophy of Marxism in the system of the sciences of nature and society.

CONCLUSION

The course of the history of philosophy, often likened to a comedy of errors, wandering in a labyrinth, and an anarchy of systems, forms one of the most important dimensions of man's intellectual progress. The quests for a correct outlook on the world and the tragic delusions and misconceptions, and divergences of philosophical doctrines, and their polarisation into mutually exclusive trends, the battle of the trends, which is sometimes perceived as a permanent philosophical scandal, are not just the searches, torments, and delusions of individual philosophers but are the spiritual drama of all humanity, and he who pictures it as a farce seemingly interprets the tragic solely as *idola theatri*.

The antinomies into which philosophy falls, the crises that rock it, the retreats and withdrawals, the following of a beaten path, including that of errors already committed in the past, the rejection of real philosophical discoveries for the sake of long-refused fallacies persistently taken for truth—do these just characterise philosophy? Philosophy is the spiritual image of mankind, and its achievements and mishaps constitute the most vital content of man's intellectual biography.

The specific feature of philosophy is theoretical comprehension of universal human experience and the whole aggregate of knowledge so as to create an integral conception of the world. The difficulties on the way of philosophical comprehension of reality are constantly increasing because the treasury of human experience and knowledge is being constantly enriched. The theoretical results of philosophical exploration are quite modest, in particular when compared with those of natural science. The fight between philosophical doctrines that throws doubts on the possibility of getting agreement even on elementary mat-

ters, evokes a sceptical attitude among non-philosopher specialists to a science so unlike the others whose fruitful results are generally recognised. But philosophy, though it does not promise very much and yields even less (as it seems to some), possesses amazing attractive force, as even philosophising dilettantes cannot help recognising who suggest to abolish it as practically useless; as Engels remarked, philosophy teaches how to think theoretically. In fact, in order to think about a separate subject, certain general notions are needed. The greater the aggregate of subjects the more general still the notions needed to understand it. As Lenin pointed out:

> anybody who tackles partial problems without having previously settled general problems, will inevitably and at every step 'come up against' those general problems without himself realising it (140:489).

In short, the broader the field of phenomena to which cognising thought turns, the broader the concepts needed for it. But theoretical thinking does not deal simply with phenomena that can be described, counted, etc., but with patterns whose universality is not limited by empirically established boundaries in space and time.

Philosophical thought is thus an obligatory premiss of theoretical knowledge. To avoid oversimplification this must not be understood in the sense that only someone who has studied philosophy will become a theoretically thinking subject. People think logically even when they have no notion of logic as a science. Maybe they mastered the elements of logic at school in mathematics lessons, in study of their native tongue, or in some other unconscious way. It is unlikely that anyone would infer from this that study of logic does not foster development of theoretical thinking. The same applies even more to philosophy. The high appraisal of philosophical knowledge in the forming of theoretical thought, in particular of its most developed forms, directly indicates the outstanding significance, perhaps still not adequately appreciated, of the scientific history of philosophy which, as a scientific, theoretical summing-up of all philosophical knowledge, is capable of playing an essentially incomparable role in developing an individual capacity for theoretical thought. One of the basic tasks of this discipline is therefore to create a rational system of the creative mastery of the inexhaustible wealth of philosophical knowledge, and to explore the patterns governing the contradictory unity of this knowledge.

The countless number of philosophical conceptions, theories, tendencies, and trends puzzles not only the novice but also spe-

cialist philosophers who are trying to comprehend this diverse knowledge ideologically. Inquiries devoted to the specific nature of philosophical knowledge, the nature of philosophical problems, the basic philosophical question, and the main philosophical trends, etc., are called upon to serve that end. This kind of inquiry allows, it seems, to take the ground from under the irrationalist conception of the anarchy of philosophical systems, which, strange as it seems at first glance, is rooted in the prejudices of everyday consciousness. It is becoming evident that the struggle of philosophical trends is quite fruitful and promising; idealism has already suffered defeat as a system of views. Development of the dialectical-materialist outlook on the world is at the same time comprehension and critical mastery of the history of philosophical thought, in which, it is my deepest conviction, there are no trivial pages.

The task of a Marxist theoretical summing-up of the course of the history of philosophy is not exhausted by study of the main trends in philosophy. That is only the beginning of a great work that must be continued by research devoted to the historical course of change in the subject-matter of philosophy, the specific forms of the continuity and progressive development of philosophical knowledge, and the moulding and development of a scientific, philosophical outlook on the world. I hope that these very important theoretical problems of the scientific history of philosophy will be the subject of special new monographs.

NOTES

[1] The stance adopted by Heisenberg on this question was more correct; in spite of his idealist fallacies, he was aware of the law-governed nature and fruitfulness of the struggle between materialism and idealism. He affirmed, for example, that 'the struggle for primacy of form, image, and idea on the one side over matter and material being, on the other side, or on the contrary, of matter over the image, and consequently the struggle between idealism and materialism, has always set human thought in motion again and again in the history of philosophy' (97:228).

[2] In another place, Planck said that 'exact science can never do without reality in the metaphysical sense' (208:23). The term 'metaphysical' sounds ambiguous, since it is a matter of sense-perceived reality. But if we allow for the fact that neopositivists treat materialism as 'metaphysics', it becomes evident against whom his proposition was directed.

[3] Robespierre considered atheism an anti-democratic doctrine, and tried to create a rationalist religious cult of the Supreme Being before whom all were equal. 'Atheism is aristocratic,' he said. 'The idea of a Supreme Being who

keeps watch over oppressed innocence and punishes triumphant crime, is wholly of the people' (224:120; 11:215). It is worth noting that this dictum does not differ much from Voltaire's aphorism about the police functions of religion, but has an opposite ideological sense: from Robespierre's standpoint religion was needed not in order to curb the 'lower orders' but in order to ensure equality of all citizens before the highest law.

[4] Demokritos explained the difference between the specific gravity of substances known from everyday experience by the difference in the 'quantity' of void in the spaces between the atoms that formed the substances. Heavy bodies contained less void than light ones, which were distinguished by a lower density. Newton, who adopted the atomistic hypothesis and defined mass or density as the quantity of matter, in essence shared Demokritos' view. One must note that modern physical notions of the superdense state of a substance are not so remote from Demokritos' idea about combinations of the dense (full) and the empty (immaterial) that formed the whole diversity of the world's phenomena.

[5] Jean-Paul Sartre, correctly stressing the humanitarian sense of the atheistic outlook, appreciated the social content of materialist philosophy in that connection, as follows: 'I find it linked to the revolutionary outlook. Epicurus, the first one who wanted definitely to rid men of their fears and chains, the first one who wanted to abolish servitude in his estate, was a materialist' (237:173-174).

[6] An eloquent example of this sophisticated justification of religion is the 'critical realism' of Santavana, of whom Morris Cohen wrote: 'He discards theologic dogmas as to God's existence as superstitions but retains those values of conventional ritual and belief which make of religion a poetry of social conduct, a heightening of the spirit in which the consciousness of the ideals of our common life expresses itself. Religion, for Santayana, serves to liberate man from worldliness' (36:254).

[7] Philosophy, Diderot said, was incompatible by definition with religion. Although that thesis oversimplified the contradictory relation between these phenomena, its real sense consisted, of course, in the affirmation that true philosophy, such as Diderot naturally considered materialism, was a denial of ordinary religious consciousness. 'Sire', he wrote 'if you want priests, you do not want philosophers, and if you want philosophers you do not want priests; for the first being by profession friends of reason and promoters of knowledge, and the latter, enemies of reason and fomenters of ignorance, if the former do good, the latter do evil; and you do not want good and evil at the same time' (40:33).

[8] The ideological idea underlying these vulgar notions was once expressed with laudable frankness by the American statesman and militant anti-Communist, John Foster Dulles, who wrote: 'We shall not qualify for survival if we become a nation of materialists' (43:240). The point concerned maintenance of the capitalist *status quo*. Dulles therefore, at the same time, criticised 'some of the idealists who want a better world' (43:165).
The American political scientist Burns called for use of police measures against supporters of materialism, to whom he lyingly attributed 'a cynical contempt for human nature, a denial that mortals are ever prompted by noble impulses' (25:74-75), That description (sic!) of materialism was intended to intimidate all opponents of the religious-idealist world outlook dominant in bourgeois society.

[9] Karl Marx noted the inadequacy of the materialism of the natural sciences in particular when it tried to interpret social phenomena: 'The weak points in the abstract materialism of natural science, a materialism that excludes history and its process, are at once evident from the abstract and ideological conceptions of its spokesmen, whenever they venture beyond the bounds of their own speciality' (167:I, 352). Lenin, too, wrote about these weak points of natural-science materialism in *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*, when characterising the ideological position of Ernst Haeckel (see 142:327-331).

[10] Acton declares that 'materialism, by asserting the reality of material substances beyond sense-experience, allows also the *possibility* of a God that transcends sense-experience too. Phenomenalism excludes God but appears committed to some sort of idealism. Materialism excludes phenomenalism but only at the expense of making God appear a possibility' (2:23). According to him, there is not more consistent anti-theological philosophy, after all, than idealism of a phenomenalist hue. When it comes to solipsism, of course, this point of view can be declared the most consistent atheism. But subjective idealists argue that they are not solipsists. The subjective-idealist interpretation of nature, therefore, as the example of Berkeley and many other supporters of phenomenalism proved, fully dovetails with theological conclusions.

[11] Max Born wrote, as regards the objects of physics, which are also objects perceived in everyday experience: 'The unsophisticated mind is convinced that they are not arbitrary products of the mind, but impressions of an external world on the mind. I cannot see any argument for abandoning this conviction in the scientific sphere' (21:50).

[12] Philosophical revisionism, which lays claim to a new, deeper understanding of established facts, in effect dictorts them. Havemann, for instance, characterised Marxist materialism as (sic!) a denial of materialism. 'It is only a variety of objective idealism,' he declares, 'and moreover an inconsistent, superficial, primitive, and vulgarised form of objective idealism' (83:30). What is this very harsh conclusion based on? Mechanistic materialism, he said, treated the laws of nature as absolute and sovereign, which not only determined but predetermined all phenomena. He obviously forgot that eighteenth-century natural science also treated the laws of nature in roughly the same way. Why then did he not consider it also to be idealist? He endeavoured to prove that mechanistic materialism counterposed the laws of nature to nature, i.e. interpreted them as something supernatural, a conclusion that is a clear stretching of the point, an insolvent attempt to depict the metaphysical-materialist world outlook as speculative idealist metaphysics.

[13] 'Philosophers who recognise only the existence of material things and bodies [Christian von Wolf said] are called materialists' (see *Das Fischer Lexikon. Philosophie*, Frankfurt-on-Main, 1967, p. 156). This point of view is accepted by many contemporary idealists, who thus ascribe a denial of the reality of the spiritual and ideal to materialism.

[14] This same thesis was repeated by pragmatism a hundred years after Hegel. William James opposed the materialists proposition of the origin of the higher from the lower, in spite of its already having acquired general scientific significance. He wrote that materialism was characterised by explaining 'higher phenomena by lower ones, and leaving the destinies of the world at the mercy

of its blinder parts and forces' (111:92-93). From the angle of James' 'radical empiricism' the 'blind', i.e. inanimate, processes of nature were brought about by 'higher phenomena' like mind and will.

[15] Cassirer interpreted the principal ontological thesis of rationalist idealism in a purely epistemological way: 'The proposition that being is a "product" of thought... contains no pointer of any sort to some physical or metaphysical causal relation, but merely signifies a purely functional connection, a relation of the higher and lower in the validity of definite judgments' (31:396). In other words, he suggested treating the idealist answer to the basic philosophical question as a judgment defining the category 'being' and not being itself, in relation to which there could not be knowledge as soon as it was thought of as existing outside thinking. Conceivable being or the category 'being' is created by thinking. That conclusion, which discards the ontological aspect of the basic philosophical question, is a subjective-idealist interpretation of its epistemological aspect.

[16] This point of view was very impressively expressed by the Russian religious existentialist Berdyaev: 'The principal attribute of philosophy is that there is no object of knowing in it. Sense is disclosed only when I look inwardly, i.e. into the spirit, and when there is no objectivity or materiality for me. All that is an object for me lacks sense' (14:9). He frankly expressed the true essence of idealism, and its hostility to scientific knowledge.

[17] I.T. Frolov correctly remarks: 'Historically the matter developed in such a way that the problem of purposiveness was discussed on the positive plane mainly in the context of idealist philosophical conceptions, while materialism —in its mechanistic form—for the most part only reacted negatively to the existing teleological interpretation of this problem, without occasionally examining the objective facts behind it. But it was precisely in the context of materialist philosophical conceptions that approaches were formulated that made it possible to elucidate the real causes for the phenomena treated as purposive' (69:36-37).

[18] Let me cite examples showing how contemporary idealism endeavours to benefit from the materialist critique of its basic propositions. Lombardi, one of the continuers of Italian Neohegelianism, hurled the following sardonic tirade at idealism: 'The reality that idealism speaks to us about is one that raises itself rather like Baron Münchhausen, who got himself out of a swamp by pulling on his hair, but with the difference that there is no swamp for idealism, nor hair, and not even a flesh-and-bone cavalier who must save himself from the swamp' (153:198). That pillorying characterisation identifies idealism with subjective idealism and, furthermore, with solipsism. Such a limited understanding of the essence of idealism makes it possible to interpret objective idealism as a non-idealist philosophy. Behind the difference between these principal versions of idealism is hidden the identity of their starting point, viz., an idealist answer to the basic philosophical question.

[19] One of the first investigators of existentialism, Johannes Pfeiffer, for whom existentialism that criticised 'the spirit of abstraction' was a negation of idealism, wrote: 'The danger of idealism is illusiveness: man as pure rational being, as the realm of realisation of the idea, is fenced off from the latent, original source of his existence' (205:16-17). The fundamental original source of human existence of which existentialists speak is not, of course,

a negation of idealism. By stressing the finiteness of man and the subjectivity of individual experiences, existentialism only counterposes an irrational form of idealism that is combined with the assertion that real human existence is only possible in this world to its rationalist form. Idealism thus never rises to a critical understanding of its own essence.

[20] The eminent neurophysiologist and Nobel Prize winner, John Eccles, for instance, said that there is an inevitable antinomy between the 'democratic community' of the billions of nerve cells that form the human brain, and the individual personality that is revealed in the experience and self-consciousness of every person. This antinomy, he suggested, was unresolvable by scientific research. And, as though he had forgotten that the scientist has no right to appeal to the supernatural, i.e. to resort to an unscientific argument, he arrived at the religious concept of the soul and recognition of its special creation by God (see 44:43; and 45 cited from 259:97). Eccles characterised his fideist position as a philosophy of the living individual. One should not be surprised that Neothomism propagandises his views as confirming Thomist philosophy (see 259:94-97).

[21] The flimsiness of the simplified view of the essence of idealism sometimes met in Marxist popular literature is therefore obvious. Boguslavsky, author of a pamphlet on the basic question of philosophy, wrote: 'The idealists' arguments lead to the conclusion that the sole person existing in the world is I, and that all other people and nature are only my sensations. Clearly, the person who asserts that he alone exists on the earth can hardly be considered normal. It is useless to listen to him' (18:13). Boguslavsky's mistake was not simply that he reduced all idealist doctrines to solipsism wiping out the essential differences between the varieties of idealism. For him idealism was a psychic anomaly. But in that case materialism's struggle against idealist philosophy appears strange at least. Do serious people dispute with madmen?

[22] One must also bear in mind that the richness of the content of idealist errors and fallacies does not simply consist in their having elements of truth, distorted and absolutised by idealism. It is due as well to the fact that idealism, as a form of social consciousness, reflects historically definite social being. In that sense religious fallacies, too, as Feuerbach showed, are rich in content in spite of their not including elements of a true reflection of reality.

[23] Some twenty or thirty years ago many Marxist historians of philosophy (and not just historians of philosophy) believed that classical idealist doctrines that disclosed and at the same time mystified truth of course had epistemological roots. But the latest idealist doctrines, which have an epigonistic character as a rule, lack any epistemological roots and are only a mystified expression of the interests of the bourgeoisie, in which there is no new knowledge whatsoever about reality. Iovchuk correctly opposed this anti-dialectical tendency, stressing that 'valuable posings of questions are to be found in contemporary bourgeois philosophical and sociological doctrines, for example the question of the "language of science" among individual positivists or the question of the fate of the individual among certain existentialists like Sartre, about the experience of mathematical methods in sociological inquiries in Western empirical sociology, etc. ...But in the main—in general theoretical conclusions, in understanding of the profound laws of contemporary social development and paths of social progress, and in philosophical comprehension of the latest advances of

science—not one bourgeois philosophical and sociological current can give a true, scientific, and consistent answer to the root problems of our age' (108:172).

[24] Motroshilova, Ogurtsov, Turovsky, and Potemkin, citing this thought of Aristotle's, made the following valuable comment in their entry in the *Philosophical Encyclopaedia:* 'The essence of things is ideally doubled in fact in knowledge, floating away ever further from the direct sense image of the object and from concrete reality. Objectively this means that the universal law of nature, inconceivable outside its development, is not itself a thing among things. Cause, source of motion, law are no longer perceived simply as a "form" directly merging with a given special motion, but as an ideal principle abstracted from corporeal motion. It is only manifested through material motion but is not identifiable with some special material sphere' (186:403). Thus we see that Plato, when inquiring into (and at the same time mystifying) the real process of cognition, revealed the dialectical opposition between theoretical and emprical knowledge, interpreting the preconditions of this opposition idealistically, representing it as absolute.

[25] Engels wrote apropos of this: 'First of all one makes sensuous things into abstractions and then one wants to know them through the senses, to see time and smell space. The empiricist becomes so steeped in the habit of empirical experience, that he believes that he is still in the field of sensuous experience when he is operating with abstractions (51:235). Empiricism, too, can thus prove to be in the power of idealist illusions, since it is not aware of the sense and meaning of abstraction.

[26] Serzhantov correctly stressed this epistemological feature of idealist empiricism: 'Idealism arises from a naturalist approach to sensations, when the latter are treated exactly as they are directly given to us, and they are given to us only as our inner experiences. Idealism takes this aspect of sensations in isolation from the object and from the nervous substratum, and conceives it as some immaterial substance' (244:89-90).

[27] Rougier wrote: 'German expresses the mobile aspects of reality, be it the processes of nature or the flux of conscious life better than French, for example, by virtue of the fundamental role it assigns to verbs.... It has a vocation for a philosophy of becoming' (228:191). Such an explanation of the dialectical philosophical tradition in Germany is, to put it mildly, verbalism; it does not explain why, for example, Hegel's dialectical idealism arose in the early nineteenth century, or what relation it had to the epochal events and scientific advances of his time and to the preceding philosophy (and not just German philosophy, of course).

[26] Bourgeois critics of Marxism depict this feature of the Marxist analysis of idealism in a distorted way. Marxists, says Acton, for example, 'think that idealism is a dishonest view' (2:24). But Marxism, as Engels noted, in principle rejects an ethical appraisal of the opposition between the materialist and idealist outlooks, pointing out that an appraisal of that kind is characteristic of the bourgeois Philistine. Acton further claimed that 'Lenin dismisses phenomenalism on the ground that it is dangerous to communism' (2:203). Lenin, of course, rejected phenomenalism as a false theory clearly contradicting the facts that was above all dangerous for science. But Acton conveniently kept silent about that.

[29] It is quite a different matter, however, when the root opposition of class interests is being considered, which comes to light in the relations between the Communist Party of the working class and bourgeois parties. This opposition—the conscious expression of the antagonistic contradiction between the main classes of bourgeois society—is ideologically comprehended by Marxist-Leninist philosophy. Garaudy's claim that the Communist Party's philosophy 'cannot, in principle, be either idealist or materialist, religious or atheist' (71:284) is therefore a renegade apostasy from Marxism, a revisionist transition to bourgeois positions.

[30] Pre-Marxian philosophers, it is true, often spoke about the vast influence of philosophy on relations between people, the state system, etc. Some of them even treated philosophy, which they considered the most adequate expression of human reason, as the driving force of social progress. But a belief in its above-party character got along alright with both recognition and denial of its outstanding role in the development of society. The main point to this conviction was denial of the fact that class interests were reflected in philosophical views.

[31] Here is a characteristic example. Leibniz, the ideologist of the pre-revolutionary German bourgeoisie, whose doctrine reflected its striving for a compromise with the feudal classes, condemned the antithesis between the haves and havenots and, citing the Gospels, substantiated the idea of community of property. 'Leibniz,' Deborin wrote in this connection, 'was convinced that community of property was the starting point of the development of humanity, and believed that history would lead to a system based on community of property' (39:107). It must not be thought that Leibniz shared the views of utopian communists on this matter. This preaching of the community of property, as Deborin showed, quite obviously expressed the strength of his denial of feudal ownership, which revealed that the bourgeois ideologist was very far from understanding what consequences the bourgeois reorganisation of society would lead to.

[32] Benjamin Franklin, the ideologist of the American bourgeois revolution, said in a paper 'Standing Queries for the Junto' that only those could be members of it who positively answered the following question: 'Do you love truth for truth's sake, and will you endeavour impartially to find and receive it yourself and communicate it to others?' (66:259). This conception of 'truth for truth's sake' had nothing in common with a contemplative attitude to reality; it was a matter of fighting the superstitions enslaving man, of mastering the elemental forces of nature, of a rational re-ordering of human life. For bourgeois ideologist a striving for truth and universal justice coincides with the task of a bourgeois transformation of social relations.

[33] I must stress that it was just in that age, when bourgeois 'impartiality' was converted into a hypocritical phrase, that the spokesmen of revolutionary democracy began more and more resolutely to express the conviction that philosophy could not adopt a neutral position on radical social problems. The Armenian revolutionary democrat Nalbandian, for instance, wrote: 'Man lacks shelter, man has no bread, man is unclad and barefooted, nature demands its own. To find a simple, natural path, to search for genuine, human, rational means for man to get shelter, have bread, cover his nakedness, and satisfy his natural needs—that is the essence of philosophy' (189:460). That partisan approach to philosophy did not take shape in a vacuum of course; it was a development of the humanist ideas of the bourgeois enlightenment of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

[34] Let me recall in this connection how Marx and Engels characterise idealist philosophy and its social stance: The alteration of consciousness divorced from actual relations—a pursuit followed by philosophers as a profession, i.e., as a *business*—is itself a product of existing relations and inseparable from them. This imaginary rising above the world is the ideological expression of the impotence of philosophers in face of the world' (178:379).

[35] Heinrich Rombach tried to show that this distancing of philosophy from socio-political reality was particularly characteristic of our time: philosophy 'no longer speaks outwardly, but only talks to itself; it is by specialists for specialists' (226:350). The philosopher, he wrote further, 'is neither a professional politician nor even a teacher, and not a theologian, judge or doctor' (*ibid.*). From that banal statement of the professionalisation of philosophical activity, however, he drew a sweeping conclusion: 'He is important only for himself and lives in his thoughts like a hermit in his cell' (*ibid*). How is this apparently neutral position to be explained in the age of struggle of two social systems and a deepening of antagonistic contradictions in capitalist countries? Can it be that Rombach's stance was quite untypical? No, he expressed one of the main tendencies in bourgeois philosophers' evaluation of philosophy's place in modern social affairs. This interpretation of it as alien to transient socio-political cataclysms was an attempt to prove that the philosophical conception of the world was recognition of it as it is, that the aspiration to change the world (even if it was quite justified) went beyond the competence of philosophy, which could neither substantiate this striving nor prove its insolvency. One must note that this point of view is often expressed by bourgeois philosophers who acknowledge that bourgeois values have been discredited but do not see the way out of the crisis of bourgeois society. And when Gilbert Ryle, for instance, called philosophers people who are 'philosophers' philosophers' (233:4), he was thereby expressing not only a conviction in regard to the independence of philosophy from other forms of knowledge but also disappointment in it.

[36] Weber, stating that 'the various systems of values of the world are in unresolvable conflict with one another' (261:545), believed that it was that fact which made it impossible to combine scientific objectivity of the researcher with any value orientation whatsoever. An orientation of this kind did not, it is true, exclude the possibility of 'discussion of the means to an end firmly *stated* in advance' (*ibid.*), but in that case science was no more than an intellectual technique. Real inquiry rose above its end results and must therefore be ready for any unexpected conclusions. Weber's argument was a systematic development of the traditional conception of the inquirer's neutrality. But neutrality and objectivity are far from coincident concepts, and disinterestedness is an attitude to reality of a kind that psychologically excludes exploratory activity.

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